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# DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

WORK AND CULTURE IN THE HOUSEHOLD,

AND THE SCHOOLMASTER'S TRUNK

CONTAINING PAPERS ON HOME LIFE IN TWEENIT

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BY  
MRS. A. M. DIAZ



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# A DOMESTIC PROBLEM.

*WORK AND CULTURE IN THE HOUSEHOLD.*

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## CHAPTER I.

TAKING A VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

OUR problem is this: How may woman enjoy the delights of culture, and at the same time fulfil her duties to family and household? Perhaps it is not assuming too much to say, that, in making known the existence of such a problem, we have already taken the first step toward its solution, just as a ship's crew in distress take the first step toward relief by making a signal which calls attention to their needs.

The next step — after having, as we may say, set our flag at half-mast — is one which, if all we hear be true, should come easily to women in council, namely, talking. And talking we must have, even

if, as in the social game called "Throwing Light," much of it is done at a venture. In that interesting little game, after a few hints have been given concerning "the word," different members of the company begin at once to talk about it, and think about it, and suggest and hazard descriptive remarks, according to the idea each has formed of it; that is, they try, though in the dark, to "throw light." As the interest increases, the excitement becomes intense. Many of the ideas expressed are absurdly wide of the mark, yet even these help to show what the answer is not; and often, by their coming in contact, a light is struck which helps amazingly. And so, in regard to our problem, we have the hints; then why not begin at once to think about it, and talk about it, and suggest, and guess, and throw light with all our might? No matter if we even get excited, say absurd things, say utterly preposterous things, make blunders. Blunders are to be expected. Let them fly right and left; by hitting together right smartly they may strike out sparks which shall help us find our way.

We all have heard of the frank country girl who said to her bashful lover, "Do say something, if it isn't quite so bright!" This, doubtless, is what

every thoughtful woman, if she expressed the sincere desire of her heart regarding our perplexing question, would say to all other women ; and it is to comply with that wish, partly expressed to me, that I have gathered up from chance observation, chance reading, and hearsay, some ideas bearing on the subject. Suppose we begin by looking about us, and making clear to our minds just what this state of things is, which, because it hinders culture, many deem so unsatisfactory. After that, we will consider its causes, reasons for changing it, and the way or ways out of it.

A few, a very few, of our women are able to live and move and have their being literally regardless of expense. These can buy of skilled assistants and competent supervisors, whole lifetimes of leisure ; with these, therefore, our problem has no concern. The larger class, the immense majority, either do their work themselves, or attend personally to its being done by others ; “others” signifying that inefficient, untrustworthy, unstable horde who come fresh from their training in peat-bog and meadow, to cook our dinners, take care of our china dishes, and adjust the nice little internal arrangements of our dwellings.

Observing closely the lives of the immense ma-

jority, I think we shall see, that, in conducting their household affairs, the object they have in view is one and the same. I think we shall see that they all strive, some by their own labors wholly, the rest by covering over and piecing out the shortcomings of "help," to present a smooth, agreeable surface to husbands and company. This smooth, agreeable surface may be compared to a piece of mosaic work composed of many parts. Of the almost infinite number of those parts, and of the time, skill, and labor required to adjust them, it hath not entered, it cannot enter, into the heart of man to conceive.

I wonder how long it would take to name, just merely to name, all the duties which fall upon the woman who, to use a common phrase, and a true one, carries on the family. Suppose we try to count them, one by one. Doing this will help to give us that clear view of the present state of things which it is our present object to obtain; though the idea reminds me of what the children used to say when I was a child, "If you count the stars you'll drop down dead," — a saying founded, probably, on the vastness of the undertaking compared with human endurance. It certainly cannot be called trivial to enumerate the duties to which

woman consecrates so large a portion of her life, especially when we remember that into each and all of these duties she has to carry her mind. Where woman's mind must go, woman's mind or man's mind, should not scorn to follow. So let us make the attempt; and we need not stand upon the order of our counting, but begin anywhere.

Setting tables; clearing them off; keeping lamps or gas-fixtures in order; polishing stoves, knives, silverware, tinware, faucets, knobs, &c.; washing and wiping dishes; taking care of food left at meals; sweeping, including the grand Friday sweep, the limited daily sweep, and the oft-recurring dustpan sweep; cleaning paint; washing looking-glasses, windows, window-curtains; canning and preserving fruit; making sauces and jellies, and "catchups" and pickles; making and baking bread, cake, pies, puddings; cooking meats and vegetables; keeping in nice order beds, bedding, and bedchambers; arranging furniture, dusting, and "picking up;" setting forth, at their due times and in due order, the three meals; washing the clothes; ironing, including doing up shirts and other "starched things;" taking care of the baby, night and day; washing and dressing children, and regulating their behavior, and making or getting made, their cloth-

ing, and seeing that the same is in good repair, in good taste, spotless from dirt, and suited both to the weather and the occasion; doing for herself what her own personal needs require; arranging flowers; entertaining company; nursing the sick; “letting down” and “letting out” to suit the growing ones; patching, darning, knitting, crocheting, braiding, quilting,—but let us remember the warning of the old saying, and forbear in time.

This, however, is only a general enumeration. This is counting the stars by constellations. Examining closely these items: we shall find them made up each of a number of smaller items, and each of these again of items still smaller. What seem homogeneous are heterogeneous; what seem simple are complex. Make a loaf of bread. That has a simple sound, yet the process is complex. First, hops, potatoes, flour, sugar, water, salt, in right proportions for the yeast. The yeast for raising the yeast must be in just the right condition, and added when the mixture is of just the right temperature. In “mixing up” bread, the temperature of the atmosphere must be considered, the temperature of the water, the situation of the dough. The dough must rise quickly, must rise just enough and no more, must be baked in an

oven just hot enough and no hotter, and must be “tended” while baking.

Try clearing off tables. Remove food from platters, care for the remnants, see that nothing is wasted, scrape well every plate, arrange in piles, carry out, wash in soap and water, rinse in clear water, polish with dry cloth, set away in their places, — three times a day.

Taking care of the baby frequently implies carrying the child on one arm while working with the other, and this often after nights made sleepless by its “worrying.” “I’ve done many a baking with a child on my hip,” said a farmer’s wife in my hearing.

But try now the humblest of household duties, one that passes for just nothing at all ; try dusting. “Take a cloth, and brush the dust off,” — stated in this general way, how easy a process it seems ! The particular interpretation, is that you move, wipe, and replace every article in the room, from the piano down to the tiniest ornament ; that you “take a cloth,” and go over every inch of accessible surface, including panelling, mop-boards, window frames and sashes, looking-glass-frames, picture-frames and cords, gas or lamp fixtures ; reaching up, tiptoeing, climbing, stooping, kneeling, taking care

that not even in the remotest corner shall appear one inch of undusted surface which any slumped individual, leaning back in his arm-chair, can spy out.

These are only a few examples ; but a little observation and an exceedingly little experience will show the curious inquirer that there is scarcely one of the apparently simple household operations which cannot be resolved and re-resolved into minute component parts. Thus dusting, which seems at first to consist of simply a few brushes with a cloth or bunch of feathers, when analyzed once, is found to imply the careful wiping of every article in the room, and of all the woodwork ; analyzed again, it implies following the marks of the cabinet-maker's tools in every bit of carving and grooving ; analyzed again, introducing a pointed stick under the cloth in turning corners. In fact, the investigator of household duties must do as does a distinguished scientist in analyzing matter,— “ continue the process of dividing as long as the parts can be discerned,” and then “ prolong the vision backward across the boundary of experimental evidence.” And, if brave enough to attempt to count them, he must bear in mind that what appear to be blank intervals, or blurred, nebulous

spaces, are, in reality, filled in with innumerable little duties which, through the glass of observation, may be discerned quite plainly. Let him also bear in mind, that these household duties must be done over and over, and over and over, and as well, each time, as if done to last forever; and, above all, that they every one require mind.

Many a common saying proves this last point. "Put your mind on your work." "Your mind must be where your work is." "She's a good hand to take hold, but she hasn't any calculation." "She doesn't know how to forecast her work." "She doesn't know how to forelay." "Nancy's gittin' past carryin' her mind inter her work. Wal, I remember when I begun to git past carryin' my mind inter my work," said an old woman of ninety, speaking of her sixty-years-old daughter. The old couplet,

"Man works from rise till set of sun,  
But woman's work is never done," —

tells the truth. "Woman's work," as now arranged, is so varied, so all-embracing, that it cannot be "done." For every odd moment some duty lies in wait. And it is generally the case, that these multi-form duties press for performance, crowds of them

at once. "So many things to be done right off, that I don't know which to take hold of first." "'Tis just as much as I can do to keep my head above water." "Oh, dear! I can't see through!" "My work drives me." "I never know what 'tis not to feel hurried." "The things I can't get done tire me more than the things I do." Such remarks have a meaning.

And those who keep "a girl" have almost equal difficulty in always presenting the smooth, agreeable surface just now spoken of. With the greater ability to hire help comes usually the desire to live in more expensive houses, and to furnish the same with more costly furniture. Every article added is a care added, and the nicer the article the nicer the care required. More, also, is demanded of these in the way of appearance, style, and social civilities; and the wear and tear of superintending "a girl" should by no means be forgotten. At any rate, the complaint, "no time to read," is frequent among women, and is not confined to any one class.

We see, then, that in the present state of things it is impossible for woman — that is, the family woman, the house-mother — to enjoy the delights of culture. External activities, especially the two insatiable, all-devouring ones which know neither

end nor beginning, — housework and sewing-work, — these demand her time, her energies, in short, demand herself, — the whole of her. Yes, the whole, and more too ; there is not enough of her to go round. There might possibly be enough, and even something left to spend on culture, were she in sound physical condition ; but, alas ! a healthy woman is scarcely to be found. This point, namely, the prevailing invalidism of woman, will come up for consideration by and by, when we inquire into the causes of the present state of things. It is none too early, however, to make a note of what some physicians say in regard to it. “ Half of all who are born,” says one medical writer, “ die under twenty years of age ; while four-fifths of all who reach that age, and die before another score, owe their death to causes which were originated in their teens. This is a fact of startling import to fathers and mothers, and shows a fearful responsibility.” Another medical writer says, “ Beside the loss of so many children (nearly twenty-five per cent), society suffers seriously from those who survive, their health being irremediably injured while they are still infants. . . . Ignorance and injudicious nursery management lie at the root of this evil.”

We must be sure not to forget that this prevailing

invalidism of women, which is one hinderance to their obtaining culture, can be traced directly back to the ignorance of mothers, for this point has an important bearing on the solution of our problem.

## CHAPTER II.

### **ONE CAUSE OF THE SITUATION.—A PART OF “WOMAN’S MISSION” CONSIDERED.**

THE question, How may work and culture be combined? was recently submitted, in my hearing, to a highly intelligent lady. She answered with a sigh, “It can’t be done. I’ve tried it; but, as things are now, it can’t be done.” By “as things are now” she meant, with the established ideas regarding dress, food, appearance, style, and the objects for which woman should spend her time and herself. Suppose we investigate the causes of the present state of things, which, as being a hindrance to culture, is to us so unsatisfactory. A little reflection will enable us to discover several. Chief among them all, I think, is one which may require close inspection before it is recognized to be such. It seems to me that the great underlying cause—the cause of all the other causes—is the want of insight, the unenlightenment, which prevails concern-

ing, not what woman's mission is, but the ways and means by which she is to accomplish it. Let us consider this.

Those who claim the right of defining it never can say often enough that the true mission of woman is to train up her children rightly, and to make home happy ; and no doubt we all agree with them. But have we, or have they, a full sense of what woman requires to fit her even for the first of these duties ? Suppose a philosopher in disguise on a tour of observation from some distant isle or planet should favor us with a visit. He finds himself, we will say, on a spot not a hundred miles from New York or Boston or Chicago. Among the objects which attract his attention are the little children drawn along in their little chaises.

“ Are these beautiful creatures of any value ? ” he asks of a bystander.

“ Certainly. They are the hope of the country. They will grow up into men and women who will take our places.”

“ I suppose there is no danger of their growing up any other than the right kind of men and women, such as your country needs ? ”

“ On the contrary, there is every danger. Evil influences surround them from their birth. These

beautiful creatures have in them the possibilities of becoming mean, base, corrupt, treacherous, deceitful, cruel, false, revengeful ; of becoming, in fact, unworthy and repulsive in many ways. Why, all our criminals, our drunkards, liars, thieves, burglars, murderers, were once innocent little children like these ! ”

“ And whether these will become like those, or not, depends on chance ? ”

“ Oh, no ! It depends largely on training, especially on early training. Children are like wax to receive impressions, like marble to retain them.”

“ Are they constituted pretty nearly alike, so that the treatment which is best for one is best for all ? ”

“ By no means. Even those in the same family are often extremely unlike. They have different temperaments, dispositions, propensities. Some require urging, others checking. Some do better with praise, others without : the same of blame. It requires thought and discernment to know what words to speak, how many to speak, and when to speak them. In fact, a child’s nature is a piece of delicate, complex machinery, and each one requires a separate study ; for, as its springs of action are concealed, the operator is liable at any time to touch the wrong one.”

"And mistakes here will affect a child through its whole lifetime?"

"They will affect it through all eternity."

"But who among you dare make these early impressions which are to be so enduring? Who are the operators on these delicate and complex pieces of mental machinery?"

"Oh! the mothers always have the care of the children. This is their mission,—the chief duty of their lives."

"But how judicious, how comprehensive, must be the course of education which will fit a person for such an office!"

"Do you think so? Hem! Well, it is not generally considered that a woman who is going to marry and settle down to family life needs much education."

"You mean, doubtless, that she only receives the special instruction which her vocation requires."

"Special instruction?"

"Yes. If woman's special vocation is the training of children, of course she is educated specially with a view to that vocation."

"Well, I never heard of such a kind of education. But here is one of our young mothers: she can tell you all about it."

We will suppose, now, that our philosopher is left with the young mother, who names over what she learned at the "institute."

"And the training of children — moral, intellectual, and physical — was no doubt made a prominent subject of consideration."

"Training of children? Oh, no! That would have been a curious kind of study."

"Where, then, were you prepared for the duties of your mission?"

"What mission do you mean?"

"Your mission of child-training."

"I had no preparation."

"No preparation? But are you acquainted with the different temperaments a child may have, and the different combinations of them? Are you competent to the direction and culture of the intellectual and moral nature? Have you skill to touch the hidden springs of action? Have you, thus un instructed, the power, the knowledge, the wisdom, requisite for guiding that mighty force, a child's soul?"

"Alas! there is hardly a day that I do not feel my ignorance on all these points."

"Are there no sources from which knowledge may be obtained? There must be books written on these subjects."

“ Possibly ; but I have no time to read them.”

“ No time? — no time to prepare for your chief mission ? ”

“ It is our mission only in print. In real life it plays an extremely subordinate part.”

“ What, then, in real life, is your mission ? ”

“ Chiefly cooking and sewing.”

“ Your husband, then, does not share the common belief in regard to woman’s chief duty.”

“ Oh, yes ! I have heard him express it many a time ; though I don’t think he comprehends what a woman needs in order to do her duty by her children. But he loves them dearly. If one should die he would be heart-broken.”

“ Is it a common thing here for children to die ? ”

“ I am grieved to say that nearly one-fourth die in infancy.”

“ And those who live, — do they grow up in full health and vigor ? ”

“ Oh, indeed they do not ! Why, look at our crowded hospitals ! Look at the apothecaries’ shops at almost every corner. Look at the advertisements of medicines. Don’t you think there’s meaning in these, and a meaning in the long rows of five-story swell-front houses occupied by physicians.

and a meaning in the people themselves? There's scarcely one of them but has some ailment."

"But is this matter of health subject to no laws?"

"The phrase, 'laws of health,' is a familiar one, but I don't know what those laws are."

"Mothers, then, are not in the habit of teaching them to their children?"

"They are not themselves acquainted with them?"

"Perhaps this astonishing ignorance has something to do with the fearful mortality among infants. Do not husbands provide their wives with books and other means of information on this subject?"

"Generally speaking, they do nothing of the kind."

"And does not the subject of hygienic laws, as applied to the rearing of children, come into the courses of study laid out for young women!"

"No, indeed. Oh, how I wish it had!— and those other matters you mentioned. I would give up every thing else I ever learned for the sake of knowing how to bring up my children, and how to keep them in health."

"The presidents and professors of your educa

tional institutions,— do they share the common belief as to woman's mission?"'

"Oh, yes! They all say that the chief business of woman is to train up her children."

(*Philosopher's solo.*)

"There seems to be blindness and stupidity somewhere among these people. From what they say of the difficulty of bringing up their children, it must take an archangel to do it rightly; still they do not think a woman who is married and settles down to family life needs much education! Moreover, in educating young women, that which is universally acknowledged to be the chief business of their lives receives not the least attention."

If our philosopher continued his inquiries into the manners and customs of our country, he must have felt greatly encouraged; for he would have found that it is only in this one direction that we show such blindness and stupidity. He would have found that in every other occupation we demand preparation. The individual who builds our ships, cuts our coats, manufactures our watches, superintends our machinery, takes charge of our cattle, our trees, our flowers, must know how, must have been especially prepared for his calling. It is only character-moulding, only shaping the destinies of immortal

beings, for which we demand neither preparation nor a knowledge of the business. It is only of our children that we are resigned to lose nearly one-fourth by death, "owing to ignorance and injudicious nursery management." Were this rate of mortality declared to exist among our domestic animals, the community would be aroused at once.

## CHAPTER III.

### CULTURE PROVED TO BE A NEED OF THE CHILD-TRAINER.

PERHAPS some day the community may come to perceive that woman requires for her vocation what the teacher, the preacher, the lawyer, and the physician, require for theirs ; namely, special preparation and general culture. The first, because every vocation demands special preparation ; and the second, because, to satisfy the requirements of young minds, she will need to draw from almost every kind of knowledge. And we must remember here, that the advantages derived from culture are not wholly an intellectual gain. We get from books and other sources of culture not merely what informs the mind, but that which warms the heart, quickens the sympathies, strengthens the understanding ; get clearness and breadth of vision, get refining and ennobling influences, get wisdom in its truest and most comprehensive sense ; and all of these, the last

more than all, a mother needs for her high calling. That it is a high calling, we have high authority to show. Dr. Channing says, "No office can compare in importance with that of training a child." Yet the office is assumed without preparation.

Herbert Spencer asks, in view of this omission, "What is to be expected when one of the most intricate of problems is undertaken by those who have given scarcely a thought as to the principles on which its solution depends? Is the unfolding of a human being so simple a process that any one may superintend and regulate it with no preparation whatever? . . . Is it not madness to make no provision for such a task?"

Horace Mann speaks out plainly, and straight to the point. "If she is to prepare a refection of cakes, she fails not to examine some cookery-book or some manuscript receipt, lest she should convert her rich ingredients into unpalatable compounds; but without ever having read one book upon the subject of education, without ever having sought one conversation with an intelligent person upon it, she undertakes so to mingle the earthly and celestial elements of instruction for that child's soul that he shall be fitted to discharge all duties below, and to enjoy all blessings above." And again, "Influences imper-

ceptible in childhood, work out more and more broadly into beauty or deformity in after life. No unskilful hand should ever play upon a harp where the tones are left forever in the strings."

In a newspaper I find this amusingly significant sentence: "Truthfully, indeed, do the Papists boast that the Episcopal Church is training-ground for Rome. The female mind is frequently enticed by display of vestments and music; and, if the Ritualists can pervert the mothers, they know that the next generation is theirs." This is significant, because it signifies that, however weak and easy of enticement the "female mind" may be, it has a mighty power to influence the young.

But we can show not only opinions and prophecies, but the results of actual scientific experiments. A recent number of "*The Popular Science Monthly*" contains an account of experiments made in Jamaica upon the mental capacity for learning of the different races there existing. The experimenter found, he says, "unequal speed," but saw "nothing which can be unmistakably referred to difference of race. The rate of improvement is due almost entirely to the relative elevation of the home circle in which the children live. Those who are restricted to the narrowest gauge of intellectual

exercise live in such a material and coarse medium that their mental faculties remain slumbering ; while those who hear at home of many things, and are brought up to intellectual employments, show a corresponding proficiency in learning.”

This, and the editor’s comments, bear directly on our side, that is to say, the culture side. The editor says it is inevitable “that the medium in which the child is habitually immersed, and by which it is continually and unconsciously impressed, should have much greater value in the formation of mental character than the mere lesson experiences of school. Home education is, after all, the great fact ; and it is domestic influences by which the characters of children are formed. Where men are exhausted by business, and women are exhausted by society (or other means), we may be pretty sure that but little can be done to shape and conduct the home with a reference to the higher mental needs of the children who live in it.”

Now, who, more than any one, “shapes and conducts the home”? Who creates these “domestic influences,” this “medium in which the child is habitually immersed”? Woman. In the name of common sense, then, throw open to woman every avenue of knowledge. Surround her with all that

will elevate and refine. Give her the highest, broadest, truest culture. Give her chances to draw inspiration from the beautiful in nature and in art. And, above all, insure her some respite from labor, and some tranquillity. Unless these conditions are observed, "but little can be done to shape and conduct the home with reference to the higher mental needs of the children who live in it."

I once heard "Grace Greenwood" tell a little story which ought to come in here, for our own object is to make out as strong a case as we possibly can. We want to prove that mothers must have culture because they are mothers. We want to show it to be absolutely necessary for woman, in the accomplishment of her acknowledged mission. When this fact is recognized, then culture will take rank with essentials, and receive attention as such.

"Grace Greenwood" said that a friend of hers, a teacher "out West," had in her school four or five children from one family. The parents were poor, ignorant, and of the kind commonly called low, coarse sort of people. The children, with one exception, were stupid, rough-mannered, and depraved. The one exception, a little girl, showed such refinement, appreciation, and quickness of apprehension, that the teacher at last asked the

mother if she could account for the striking difference between this child and its brothers and sisters. The mother could not. The children had been brought up together there in that lonely place, had been treated alike, and had never been separated. She knew the little girl was very different from her brothers and sisters, but knew not the reason why. The teacher then asked, "Was there any thing in your mode of life for the months preceding her birth, that there was not in the corresponding time before the births of the others?" The mother at first answered decidedly that there was nothing; but after thinking a few moments said, "Well, there was one, a very small thing, but that couldn't have had any thing to do with the matter. One day a peddler came along; and among his books was a pretty, red-covered poetry book, and I wanted it bad. But my husband said he couldn't afford it, and the peddler went off. I couldn't get that book out of my mind; and in the night I took some of my own money, and travelled on foot to the next town, found the peddler, bought the book, and got back before morning, and was never missed from the house. That book was the greatest comfort to me that ever was. I read it over and over, up to the day my child was born."

Also would come in well here that oft-told story of a pauper named "Margaret," who was once "set adrift in a village of the county . . . and left to grow up as best she could, and from whom have descended two hundred criminals. The whole number of this girl's descendants, through six generations, is nine hundred; and besides the 'two hundred' a large number have been idiots, imbeciles, drunkards, lunatics, and paupers."

Friends, to say nothing of higher motives, would it not be good policy to educate wisely every girl in the country? Are not mothers, as child-trainers, in absolute need of true culture? In cases where families depend on the labor of their girls, perhaps the State would make a saving even by compensating these families for the loss of such labor. Perhaps it would be cheaper, even in a pecuniary sense, for the State to do this, than to support reformatory establishments, prisons, almshouses, and insane-asylums, with their necessary retinues of officials. Institutions in which these girls were educated might be made self-supporting, and the course of instruction might include different kinds of handicraft.

It was poor economy for the State to let that pauper "grow up as best she could." It would

probably have been money in the State's pocket had it surrounded "Margaret" in her early childhood with the choicest productions of art, engaged competent teachers to instruct her in the solid branches, in the accomplishments, in hygiene, in the principles and practice of integrity, and then have given her particular instruction in all matters connected with the training of children. And had she developed a remarkable taste for painting, for modelling, or for music, the State could better have afforded even sending her to Italy, than to have taken care of those "two hundred criminals," besides "a large number" of "idiots, imbeciles, drunkards, lunatics, and paupers."

## CHAPTER IV.

THE OTHER PART OF "WOMAN'S MISSION." — RUFFLES VERSUS READING. — THE CULTIVATION OF THE FINGERS.

LET us leave for a while this matter of child-training, and consider the other part of woman's mission,—namely, "making home happy." It would seem that even for this the wife should be at least the equal of her husband in culture, in order that the two may be in sympathy. When a loving couple marry, they unite their interests, and it is in this union of interests that they find happiness. We often hear from a wife or a husband remarks like these: "I only half enjoyed it, because he (or she) wasn't there;" "It will be no pleasure to me unless he (or she) is there too;" "The company were charming, but still I felt lonesome there without him (or her)." The phrase "half enjoy" gives the idea; for a sympathetic couple are to such a degree one that a pleasure which comes to either

singly can only be half enjoyed, and even this half-joy is lessened by the consciousness of what the other is losing. In a rather sarcastic article, taken from an English magazine, occur a few sentences which illustrate this point very well. The writer is describing a honeymoon : —

“The real difficulty is to be entertaining. The one thirst of the young bride is for amusement, and she has no idea of amusing herself. It is diverting to see the spouse of this ideal creature wend his way to the lending library, after a week of idealism, and the relief with which he carries home a novel. How often, in expectation, has he framed to himself imaginary talks, — talk brighter and wittier than that of the friends he forsakes ! But conversation is difficult in the case of a refined creature who is as ignorant as a Hottentot. He begins with the new Miltonic poem, and finds she has never looked into ‘Paradise Lost.’ He plunges into the Reform Bill ; but she knows nothing of politics, and has never read a leading article in her life. Then she tries him, in her turn, and floods him with the dead chat of the town and an ocean of family tattle. He finds himself shut up for weeks with a creature who takes an interest in nothing but Uncle Cross-patch’s temper and the scandal about Lady X.

Little by little the absolute pettiness, the dense dulness, of woman's life, breaks on the disenchanted devotee. His deity is without occupation, without thought, without resources. He has a faint faith in her finer sensibility, in her poetic nature : he fetches his Tennyson from his carpet-bag, and wastes 'In Memoriam' on a critic who pronounces it pretty ! "

In cases of this kind, the half-joy is strikingly apparent. We see that a husband possessing culture is likely to be lonesome among his poets and his poetry, his works of reform, and his lofty ideas, unless — she is there too.

If it be said that learned women are prone to think lightly of home comforts and home duties, to despise physical labor, to look down on the ignorant, let us hasten to reply that learning is not culture, and that we want not learned mothers, but enlightened mothers, wisely educated mothers. And let us steadfastly and perseveringly assert that enlightenment and a wise education are essential to the accomplishment of the mother's mission. When the house-father feels the truth of this, then shall we see him bringing home every publication he can lay his hands on which treats intelligently of mental, moral, or physical training. Then shall we hear him saying to the house-mother, " Cease, I pray you, this ever-

lasting toil. Read, study, rest. With your solemn responsibilities, it is madness thus to spend yourself, thus to waste yourself." In his home shall the true essentials assume that position which is theirs by right, and certain occupations connected with that clamorous square inch of surface in the upper part of the mouth shall receive only their due share of attention. For in one way or another, either by lessening the work or by hiring workers, the mother shall have her leisure.

And what will women, what will the house-mothers, do when they feel this truth? Certainly not as they now do. Now it is their custom to fill in every chink and crevice of leisure time with sewing. "Look," said a young mother to me: "I made all these myself, when holding the baby, or by sitting up nights." They were children's clothes, beautifully made, and literally covered with ruffles and embroidery. Oh the thousands of stitches! The ruffles ran up and down, and over and across, and three times round. Being white, the garments were of course changed daily. In the intervals of baby-tending, the mother snatched a few minutes here and a few minutes there to starch, iron, flute, or crimp a ruffle, or to finish off a dress of her own. This "finishing off" was carried on for weeks. When

her baby was asleep, or was good, or had its little ruffles all fluted, and its little sister's little ruffles were all fluted, then would she seize the opportunity to stitch, to plait, to flounce, to pucker, and to braid. Wherever a hand's breadth of the original material was left visible, some bow, or band, or queer device, was fashioned and sewed on. This zealous individual, by improving every moment, by sitting up nights, by working with the baby across her lap, accomplished her task. The dress was finished, and worn with unutterable complacency. It is this last part which is the worst part. They have no misgivings, these mothers. They expect your warm approval. "I can't get a minute's time to read," said this industrious person; and, on another occasion, "I'll own up, I don't know any thing about taking care of children." Swift, speaking of women, said that they "employ more thought, memory, and application to become fools than would serve to make them wise and useful;" and perhaps he spoke truly. For suppose this young mother had been as eager to gain ideas as she was to accomplish a bias band, a French fold, or a flounce. Suppose that, in the intervals of baby-tending, instead of fluting her little girls' ruffles and embroidering their garments, she had tried to snatch some information wh.ch

would help her in the bringing up of those little girls. The truth is, mothers take their leisure time for what seems to them to be first in importance. It is easy to see what they consider essentials, and what, from them, children are learning to consider essentials. The “knowingness” of some of our children on subjects connected with dress is simply appalling. A girl of eight or ten summers will take you in at a glance, from topmost plume to boot-tap, by items and collectively, analytically and synthetically. She discourses, in technical terms, of the fall of your drapery, the propriety of your trimmings, and the effect of this, that, or the other. She has a proper appreciation of what is French in your attire, and a proper scorn of what is not. She recognizes “real lace” in a twinkle of her eye, and “all wool” with a touch of her finger-tips. Plainly clad school-children are often made to suffer keenly by the cutting remarks of other school-children sumptuously arrayed. A little girl aged six, returning from a child's party, exclaimed, “O mamma! What do you think? Bessie had her dress trimmed with lace, and it wasn't real!”

The law, “No child shall walk the street in a plain dress,” is just as practically a law as if it had been enacted by the legal authorities. Mothers

obey its high behests, and dare not rebel against it. Look at our little girls going to school, each with her tucks and ruffles. Who "gets time" to do all that sewing? where do they get it, and at what sacrifices? A goodly number of stitches and moments go to the making and putting on of even one ruffle on one skirt. Think of all the stitches and moments necessary for the making and putting of all the ruffles on all the skirts of the several little girls often belonging to one family! What a prospect before her has a mother of little girls! And there is no escape, not even in common sense. A woman considered sensible in the very highest degree will dress her little girl like other little girls, or perish in the attempt. How many do thus perish, or are helped to perish, we shall never know. A frail, delicate woman said to me one day, "Oh, I do hope the fashions will change before Sissy grows up, for I don't see how it will be possible for me to make her clothes." You observe her submissive, law-abiding spirit. The possibility of evading the law never even suggests itself. There is many a feeble mother of grown and growing "Sissys" to whom the spring or fall dressmaking appears like an avalanche coming to overwhelm her, or a Jugger-naut coming to roll over her. She asks not, "How

shall I escape?" but, "How shall I endure?" Let her console herself. These semi-annual experiences are all "mission." All sewing is "mission;" all cooking is "mission." It matters not what she cooks, nor what she sews. "Domestic," and worthy all praise, does the community consider that woman who keeps her hands employed, and is bodily present with her children inside the house.

But her bodily presence, even with mother love and longing to do her best, is not enough. There should be added two things,—knowledge and wisdom. These, however, she does not have, because to obtain them are needed what she does not get,—leisure, tranquillity, and the various resources and appliances of culture; also because their importance is not felt even by herself; also because the community does not yet see that she has need of them. And this brings us round to the point we started from,—namely, that the present unsatisfactory state of things is owing largely to the want of insight, or *unenlightenment*, which prevails concerning what woman needs and must have in order rightly to fulfil her mission.

## CHAPTER V.

## OTHER CAUSES CONSIDERED.—MASCULINE IDEA OF WOMAN'S WORK.

**A**NOTHER supporting cause, as we may call it, of the existing state of things is the ignorance of mankind concerning the cost of carrying on the family,—not the cost to themselves in money, but the cost to woman in endurance. Of its power to exhaust her vital forces they have not the remotest idea. Each of its little ten-minute duties seems so trifling that to call it work appears absurd. They do not reflect that often a dozen of these ten-minute duties must be crowded into an hour which holds but just six ten-minutes; that her day is crowded with these crowded hours; that consequently she can never be free from hurry, and that constant hurry is a constant strain upon her in every way. They themselves, they think, could do up the work in half the time, and not feel it a bit. \*Scarcely a man of them but thinks the dishes might be just rinsed off under

the faucet, and stood up to dry. Scarcely a man of them who, if this were tried, would not cast more than inquiring glances at his trencher; for it is always what is not done that a man sees. If one chair-round escapes dusting, it is that chair-round which he particularly notices. In his mind then are two ideas: one is of the whole long day, the other of that infinitesimal undone duty. The remark visible on his countenance is this: “The whole day, and no time to dust a chair-round!”

“The painful warrior famousd for fight,  
After a thousand victories, once foiled,  
Is from the book of honor razèd quite,  
And all the rest forgot for which *she* toiled.”

Many a toiling housewife, warring against untidiness, has felt the truth of these lines, though she may not have known that the great poet embodied it in words.

One mistake of man's is, that he does not look upon the tidy state of a room as a result, but as one into which, if left to itself, it would naturally fall and remain. We know, alas! too well, that every room not only has within itself possibilities of untidiness, but that its constant tendency is in that direction, which tendency can only be checked by

as constant a vigilance. Again, husbands do not always seem to understand plain English. There are certain expressions in common use among women, which, if husbands did understand plain English, would make them sadder and wiser men. "I'm completely used up;" "I never know what 'tis to feel rested;" "I'm too tired to sleep;" "I'm as tired in the morning as when I go to bed;" "Every nerve in me throbs so that I can't go to sleep;" "The life has all gone out of me;" "I am crazed with cares;" "The care is worse than the work;" "Nothing keeps that woman about the house but her ambition;" "It is the excitement of work that keeps her up." Now, how is it that a woman works on after she is completely used up? What is the substance, the capacity of this "ambition" on which alone she lives? A friend of mine, in answer to a suggestion that she should stop and take a few days' rest, said, "I don't dare to stop. If I let down, if I give way for ever so little while, I never could go on again." Think of living always in this state of tension! The dictionary definition of "tension" is "a peculiar, abnormal, constrained condition of the parts, arising from the action of antagonistic forces, in which they endeavor to return to their natural

state." Exactly. There are thousands of women in just this condition, sustained there by the daily pressure and excitement of hurry, and by a stern, unyielding "must." In the treadmill of their household labor, breakfast, dinner, and supper revolve in ceaseless course, and they *must* step forward to meet them. And, when more of her vitality is expended daily than is daily renewed by food and rest, woman does, actually and without any figure of speech, use herself up. Yes, she burns herself for fuel, and goes down a wreck,—not always to death; often it is to a condition made wretched by suffering, sometimes to insanity.

I would not have believed this last had I not found it in print. In an English magazine occurs the following passage: "Some whose eyes follow these lines will recollect disagreeable seasons when their attention was distracted by conflicting cares and claims; when no one thing, however urgent, could be finished, owing to the intrusion of one or more inevitable distractions. A continued course of such inroads on the mind's serenity could be supported but by few intellects. Most pitiable is the mind's state after some hours of such distracting occupation, in which every business interferes with every other, and none is satisfactorily accomplished.

Where there is a tendency to insanity it is sure to be developed by such an undesirable state of things.” This is fitly supplemented by a statement made in an American magazine: “We are told that the woman’s wards in the New England insane asylums are filled with middle-aged wives — mothers — driven there by overwork and anxiety.”

Not long since, I heard Mr. Whittier tell the story of a woman who attempted suicide by throwing herself into the water. “Discouragement” was the reason she assigned for committing so dreadful a deed, — discouragement at the never-ending routine of household labor, and from feeling herself utterly unable to go on with it. This, with care, want of recreation, and long confinement in-doors, had probably caused temporary insanity.

The “never-endingness” of woman’s work is something to be considered. A wide-awake writer, speaking of husbands and wives, says, “The outdoor air, the stir, the change of ideas, the passing word for this man or that, unconsciously refresh, and lift him from the cankering care of work. . . . His work may be heavier, but it wears him on one side only. He has his hours sacred to business to give to his brief, his sermon, his shop. There is no drain on the rest of his faculties. She has not a power of

mind, a skill of body, which her daily life does not draw upon. She asks nothing better of fate than that whatever strength she has of body and mind shall be drained for her husband and children. Now, this spirit of martyrdom is a very good thing when it is necessary. For our part, we see no occasion for it here." This is the point exactly. The "martyrdom," too often, is for objects not of the highest importance. The lack of appreciation of woman's work, as shown by man-kind in the newspapers, would be amusing, were it not saddening. Articles, dictating with solemn pomposity "what every married woman should be able to do," often appear in print, and these embodiments of (masculine) wisdom editors are eager to copy. "Every married woman should be able to cut and make her own, her husband's, and her children's clothes." The husband reads,—aloud of course, this time,—and nods approval. "To be sure, that would make a saving." The wife hears, and sighs, and perhaps blames herself that on account of her incapacity money is wasted. What the newspaper says must be true. Perhaps by sitting up later, by getting up earlier, by hurrying more, and by never setting her foot outside the door, she might follow this suggestion. "Every married woman" whose boys take

to reading should snip such newspaper articles into shreds, burn them up, and bury the ashes.

Another cause of the present state of things is the lowness of the standard which has been set up for woman to attain. We have glanced at some of the things which are expected of the woman who carries on the family. What is not expected is a point of no less significance. Neither husbands nor company claim the right to expect, in that smooth, agreeable surface mentioned at the beginning, the results of mental culture. They may be gratified at finding them ; but so long as the woman is amiable, thrifty, efficient, and provides three good meals every day, they feel bound not to complain. Here are the ten "Attributes of a Wife," as grouped by one of the world's famous writers : note what he allots to education : "Four to good temper, two to good sense, one to wit, one to beauty ; the remaining two to be divided among other qualities, as fortune, connection, education or accomplishments, family, and so on. Divide these two parts as you please, these minor proportions must all be expressed by fractions. Not one among them is entitled to the dignity of an integer."

The prevalent belief that woman is in some degree subordinate to man, is rather taken for

granted than expressly taught, as witness a certain kind of legend often told to young girls: "Once upon a time a young man, visiting a strange house, saw a damsel putting dough into pans, and saw that the dough which stuck to the platter was left sticking there; whereupon the young man said, 'This is not the wife for me.' " In another house he sees a damsel who leaves not the dough which sticks to the platter; and he says, "This is the wife for me." Another young man offers to successive maidens a skein of tangled silk to wind. The first says, "I can't;" the second tries, and gives up; the third makes a quick job of it with her scissors; the fourth spends hours in patiently untangling, and is chosen. Now, what shows the state of public sentiment is the fact that in none of these legends is it intimated that the young man was fortunate in securing a thrifty or a patient wife. It was the thrifty or patient young woman who was fortunate in being selected by a young man,—by any young man; for the character of the youth is never stated. There is an inference, also, in the second one given, that the "hours" of a young woman can be employed to no better purpose than that of untangling a skein of silk. All this is throwing light on our problem, for so long as so much is expected of

woman physically, and so little in the way of mental acquirements ; so long as it is taken for granted that she is a subordinate being, that to contribute to the physical comfort and pleasure of man, and gain his approval, are the highest purposes of her existence, — it will not be considered essential that she should acquire culture. These aims are by no means unimportant ones, or unworthy ones ; but are they in all cases the highest a woman should possess ?

## CHAPTER VI.

REASONS FOR A CHANGE. — THE EARLY TRAINING OF WOMEN. — COMMON FALLACIES. — THE EDUCATION OF MOTHERS.

HAVING glanced at the present state of things, and at some of its causes, let us show reasons why it should be changed.

A sufficient reason is, because it dwarfs the intellect, ruins the health, and shortens the lives, of so many women. Another reason is, that whereas the husband may keep himself informed on matters of general interest in literature, art, science, and progress, while the wife must give her mind to domestic activities, there is danger of the two growing apart, which growing apart is destructive of that perfect sympathy so essential to the happiness of married life. A certain librarian remarked, “ If a man wants a book for himself, I pick out a solid work; if for his wife, a somewhat light and trifling one.” Third, because human beings have so much

in common, are so closely connected, that the good of all requires the good of each, and each of all. And here is where the shortsightedness of the aristocracy of wealth and the aristocracy of sex are strikingly apparent. They fail to see that the very inferiority of what are called the inferior classes re-acts on the superior classes. We all know how it is in the human body. An injury to one small bone in the foot may cause distress which shall be felt "all over," and shall disturb the operations of the lordly brain itself. So in the body social. The wealthy and refined, into whose luxurious dwellings enters no unsightly, no uncleanly object, may say to themselves, "Never mind those poor wretches down at the other end, huddled together in their filthy tenements. They are ignorant, they don't know how to get along; but their condition doesn't concern us, so long as our houses are light, clean, and airy."

Those poor wretches, however, because they are ignorant, because they don't know how "to get along," because they live huddled together in filthy tenements, breathing foul air, starving on bad food, become a ready prey to infectious diseases. The infectious diseases spread. Men of wealth, from the refined and cleanly quarters, encounter in their

business walks representatives from the degraded and disgusting quarter, and take from them the seeds of those diseases ; or, on some fatal day, a miasma from the corruption of the degraded quarter is wafted in at the windows of the luxurious dwellings, and the idols of those dwellings are stricken down. So in the body politic. The wise and well-to-do enact laws, obedience to which is for the general good. The ignorant and poverty-stricken, because of their unenlightened condition, cannot see that obedience is for the good of all, and break those laws. Hence crimes, the effects of which the wise and well-to-do are made to feel, and for the punishment of which they are made to pay. It is the same with man and woman. Man says, "Let woman manage her domestic concerns, attend to her children, and gain the approbation of her husband. These are her chief duties, and for these little culture is needed." But woman becomes the mother of sons who become men ; and the character, condition, and destiny of those sons who become men are, as we have seen, determined largely by the condition, pre-natal and post-natal, of the mothers. So that the ignorance in which woman is kept by man re-acts on man.

A fourth reason for a change is, that we live in a

republic. In a republic every man has a voice in public affairs. Every man is first a child ; and children, commonly speaking, are what the mother's influence helps to make them. Therefore, if you would have the country wisely, honestly, and decently governed, give the children the right kind of mothers. If the community knew its own interests, it would not merely permit women all possible means of culture, but would force all possible means of culture upon them. It would say, "We can't afford that you exhaust yourselves by labor, that you fritter yourselves away in vanities ; for by your deficiencies we all suffer, by your losses we all lose."

But mark how stupid the community is. It desires that all its members shall possess wisdom and integrity ; it declares that, in regard to character, a great deal depends on early training ; it declares that this early training is the duty of mothers ; and yet it does not take the next step, and say, *Therefore* mothers should be qualified for their duty, and have every facility for performing it satisfactorily. It asserts with great solemnity, "Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined," then gives all its twigs into the hands of mothers, saying, "Here, bend

these: it makes a terrible difference how they are bent, but then it is not important that you have given any attention to the process.” Or, to vary the statement, the community virtually addresses woman in this way: “A fearful responsibility rests upon you. It is the responsibility of training these young, immortal souls. This is your mission, your high and holy calling. You will, however, get little time to attend to it; and, as for any special preparation or knowledge of the subject, none is required. There’s a great deal of delicate and complex machinery to superintend, and a mistake will tell fearfully in the result; but, never mind, we’ll trust luck.” “Do we not,” as Horace Mann once asked, “do we not need some single word where we can condense into one monosyllable the meaning of ten thousand fools?” Some deny the power of early training. “Look!” they say, “there is a family of children brought up just alike, and see how differently they all turn out.” But a family of children should not be brought up just alike. Different temperaments require different treatment. And this is exactly the point where knowledge is necessary, and a wisdom almost superhuman. That

character is the result of "inherited traits," as well as of education, does not affect the case, since children "inherit" from mothers and the sons of mothers.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *A WAY OUT.*

BUT suppose we leave this part of our subject, and endeavor now to find a way out of this present state of things. Let us keep the situation clearly before us. As things are, woman cannot obtain culture because of being overburdened with work and care, and also because of her enfeebled condition physically. To what is this present state of things owing? Largely to the unworthy views of both men and women concerning the essentials of life, and concerning the requirements of woman's vocation. And these unworthy views of men and women, to what are they owing? In a very great measure to early impressions. Who, chiefly, are responsible for these? Mothers. They are also, as has been shown, responsible for the larger part of the prevailing invalidism of woman. Let us be sure to bear in mind that these evils, these hinderances to culture, can be traced directly back to the influence

and the ignorance of mothers ; for here is where the whole thing hinges. Here is a basis to build upon. Child-training is at the beginning. Child-training is woman's work. Everybody says so. The wise say so. The foolish say so. The "oak and vine" man says so. The "private way, dangerous passing" man says so. Very good. If this is woman's work, *educate her for her work*. If "educate" isn't the right word, instruct her, inform her, teach her, prepare her ; name the process as you choose, so that it enables her to comprehend the nature of her business, and qualifies her to perform its duties. She requires not only general culture, but special preparation, a technical preparation if you will. Let this come in as the supplementary part of what is called her education. Many will pronounce this absurd ; but why is it absurd ? Say we have in our young woman's class at the "Institute," thirty or forty or fifty young women. Now, we know that almost every one of these, either as a mother or in some other capacity, will have the care of children. The "Institute" assumes to give these young women such knowledge as shall be useful to them in after life. If "Institutes" are not for this purpose, what are they for ? One might naturally suppose, then, that the kind of knowledge which its

pupils need for their special vocation would rank first in importance. And what kind will they need? Step into the house round the corner, or down the street, and ask that young mother, looking with unutterable tenderness upon the little group around her, what knowledge she would most value. She will say, "I long more than words can express to know how to keep these children well. I want to make them good children, to so train them that they will be comforts to themselves and useful to others. But I am ignorant on every point. I don't know how to keep them well, and I don't know how to control them, how to guide them."

"It is said," you reply, "that every child brings love with it. Is not love all-powerful and all-sufficient?"

"Love does come with every child; but, alas! knowledge does not come with the love. My love is so strong, and yet so blind, that it even does harm. I would almost give up a little of my love if knowledge could be got in exchange."

Here, perhaps, you inquire, somewhat sarcastically, if no instruction on these subjects was given at the "Institute." She opens wide her astonished eyes. "Oh, no! No, indeed,—surely not."

"What, then, were you taught there?"

"Well, many things,—Roman history for one. We learned all about the Punic Wars, their causes, results, and the names of the famous generals on both sides."

Now, if a Bostonian were going to Europe, it would do him no harm to be told the names of all the streets in Chicago, the names of the inhabitants of each street, with the stories of their lives, their quarrels, reconciliations, and how each one rose or fell to his position. Acquiring these facts would be good mental exercise, and from a part of them he would learn something of human nature. But what that man wants to know more than any thing is, on what day the steamer sails for Europe: is she seaworthy? what are her accommodations? is she well provisioned, well manned, well commanded? are her life-preservers stuffed with cork or shavings? So, if a man is going to build a boat, you might show him a collection of fossils, and discourse to him of the gneiss system, the mica-schist system, or talk of the atomic theory and protoplasms. Such knowledge would help to enlarge his views, extend his range of vision, and strengthen his memory, but would not help the man to build his boat. He wants to know how to lay her keel straight, how to hit the right proportions, how to make her mind

her helm, how to make her go ; and he has been taught that the great pachyderms are divided into paleotheria and anoplotheria. The same of our young mother : she wants to know how to bring up her child, and she has been taught “ how many Punic wars there were, their causes, results, and the names of the famous generals on both sides.”

It may be asked here, in what way, or by what studies, shall the young woman’s class at the “ Institute ” be taught the necessary knowledge ? It would be presumption in one like me to attempt a complete answer to that question. But the professors, presidents, and stockholders of our “ Institutes ” are learned and wise. If these will let their light shine in this direction as they have let it shine in other directions, a way will be revealed. But, while learning and wisdom are getting ready to do this, mere common sense may offer a few suggestions. Suppose the young woman’s class were addressed somewhat in this way : “ It is probable that all of you, in one capacity or another, will have the care of young children, and that for the majority it will be the chief duty of your lives. There is, then, nothing in the whole vast range of learning so important to you as knowledge on this subject.” This for a general statement to begin with. As for

the particular subjects and their order, common sense would ask, first, What does a young mother want to know first? First, she wants to know how to keep her child alive, how to make it strong to endure or defy disease. She needs to be taught, for instance, why a child should breathe pure air, and why it should not get its pure air in the form of draughts. She needs to know if it makes any difference what a child eats, or how often, and that a monotonous diet is injurious. She needs to know something of the nutritive qualities of different kinds of food, and why some are easy of digestion and others not, and in what way each kind builds up the system. She needs to understand the chemistry of cookery, in order to judge what kinds of food are calculated to make the best blood, bones, and muscles. She needs to have some general ideas in regard to ways of bringing back the system from an abnormal to a healthy state; as, for instance, equalizing the circulations. Learned professors, women physicians, will know how to deliver courses of lectures on all such subjects, and to tell what books have been written on them, and where these books may be found. And, as for the absurdity of teaching these things beforehand, compare that with the absurdity of rearing a race to hand over to phy-

sicians and undertakers, and choose between. And even apart from their practical bearing, why are not such items of knowledge as well worth learning, as simply items of knowledge, as the hundreds of others which, at present, no young woman's course can be without? There is no doubt that if mothers were given a knowledge of these matters beforehand, instead of being left to acquire it experimentally, the present frightful rate of infant mortality (nearly twenty-five per cent) would be reduced. Plenty of light has been thrown on this subject, but the community does not receive it. Here is some which was contributed to one of the Board of Health reports by a physician.

"The mother," he says, "requires something more than her loving instincts, her ready sympathies. With all her good-will and conscientiousness, mistakes are made. The records of infant mortality offer a melancholy illustration of the necessity of the mother's previous preparation for the care of her children. The first-born die in infancy in much larger proportion than their successors in the family. The mother learns at the cost of her first child, and is better prepared for the care of the second, and still better for the third and fourth, whose chances of development into full life and strength are much

greater than those of the oldest brothers and sisters."

Think of the mother learning "at the cost of her first child," and of the absurd young woman learning beforehand; and choose between. Also please compare the "previous preparation" here recommended with the mere bureau-drawer preparation, which is the only one at present deemed necessary. Another writer, an Englishman, speaking of the high rate of infant mortality, says, "It arises from ignorance of the proper means to be employed in rearing children," which certainly is plain language. Such facts and opinions as these would make an excellent basis for a course of lectures at the "Institute," to be given by competent women physicians. The advertisements of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" would be remarkably suggestive in this connection. A mother of three little children said to me, "I give the baby her dose right after breakfast; and she goes to sleep, and sleeps all the forenoon. That's the way I get my work done." We all know why the baby sleeps after taking its dose. We do not know how many mothers adopt this means of getting their work done; but the fact that the proprietor of this narcotic gained his immense wealth by the sale of it enables us to form some idea.

The importance of educating nursery-girls for their calling, and the physical evils which may arise from leaving young children entirely to the care of nursery-girls, would be exceedingly suggestive as lecture subjects. Mr. Kingsley asks, “ Is it too much to ask of mothers, sisters, aunts, nurses, and governesses, that they should study thrift of human health and human life by studying somewhat the laws of life and health ? There are books—I may say a whole literature of books—written by scientific doctors on these matters, which are, to my mind, far more important to the schoolroom than half the trashy accomplishments, so called, which are expected to be known by our governesses.”

But, supposing a mother succeeds in keeping her child alive and well, what knowledge does she desire next ? She desires to know next how to guide it, influence it, mould its character. She does all these, whether she tries to or not, whether she knows it or not, whether she wishes to or not. Says Horace Mann, “ It ought to be understood and felt, that in regard to children all precept and example, all kindness and harshness, all rebuke and commendation, all forms, indeed, of direct or indirect education, affect mental growth, just as dew, and sun, and shower, or untimely frost, affect vegetable

growth. Their influences are integrated and made one with the soul. They enter into spiritual combination with it, never afterward to be wholly decompounded. They are like the daily food eaten by wild game, so pungent in its nature that it flavors every fibre of their flesh, and colors every bone in their bodies. Indeed, so pervading and enduring is the effect of education upon the youthful soul, that it may well be compared to a certain species of writing ink, whose color at first is scarcely perceptible, but which penetrates deeper and grows blacker by age, until, if you consume the scroll over a coal-fire, the character will still be legible in the cinders."

In regard to inherited bad traits, the question arises, if even these may not be changed for the better by skilful treatment given at a sufficiently early period. Children inheriting diseased bodies are sometimes so reared as to become healthy men and women. To do this requires watchfulness and wise management. How do we know that by watchfulness and wise management children born with inherited bad traits may not be trained to become good men and women? But the majority of mothers do not watch for such traits. It seldom occurs to them that they should thus watch. Why not bring

the subject to the consideration of young women "beforehand," when, being assembled in companies, they are easy of access? It is too late when they are scattered abroad, and burdened each with her pressing family duties. "Forewarned is fore-armed."

Some are of the opinion that the badness which comes by inheritance cannot be changed. This is equivalent to believing that there is no help for the evil in the world. Unworthy and vicious parents are continually transmitting objectionable traits to their children, who in turn will transmit them to theirs, and so on to the end of time. Shall we fold our hands, and resign ourselves to the prospect, while our educators go on ignoring the whole matter, and leaving those who might affect a change ignorant that it is in their power to do so?

"But," says one, "the children of those people who thought so much about education, and who started with model theories, behave no better than other people's children." This may be true, and still prove nothing. "Those people" might not have thought wisely about education. Their model theories might not have been adapted to the various temperaments often found in one family. Their children might have been exceptionally faulty by

nature ; unsuspected inherited traits may have developed themselves, and interfered with the workings of the model theories. The failure of "those people" shows all the more the need of preparation given "beforehand," and given by those who make the subject a special study, just as the professor of history, or mathematics, or natural philosophy, makes his department a special study.

When we consider how much is at stake, it really seems as if learned and wise professors could not employ their learning and wisdom to better purpose than in devising ways of enlightening the "young woman's class" upon any and every point which has a bearing on the intellectual and moral training of children.

## CHAPTER VIII.

**SUGGESTIONS FOR LECTURE TOPICS.**

**I**T is not to be supposed that enlightenment on subjects pertaining to the intellectual and moral training of children can be given to a young woman in text-book fashion, cut and dried, put up in packages, and labelled ready for use. But it will be something gained to set her thinking on these subjects, to make her feel their importance, and to inform her in what books and by what writers they have been considered. All this, and more to the same purpose, could be done by lectures and discussions, for which lectures and discussions even humble common sense need be at no loss to suggest topics. There are, for instance, the different methods of governing, of reproofing, of punishing, and of securing obedience; the evils of corporal punishment, of governing by ridicule, of showing temper while punishing. Then there are questions like these: How

far should love of approbation be encouraged? What prominence shall be given to externals, as personal appearance, the minutiae of behavior, politeness of speech? How may perfect politeness be combined with perfect sincerity? Ways of inculcating integrity. How to teach self-reliance, without fostering self-conceit. How to encourage prudence and economy, and at the same time discourage parsimony. How to combine firmness with kindness. Implicit obedience a good basis to work on. How to enter into a child's life, and make it a happy one. How not to become a slave to a child's whims. The different amounts of indulgence and of assistance which different temperaments will bear. How shall liberality be inculcated, and extravagance denounced? On deceitfulness as taught by parents. On lying as taught by parents. On the impossibility of making one theory work in a whole family of children, or always on a single child. Shall obedience be implicit, and how early in the child's life shall it be exacted? On marriages. On the true issues of life. When shall ambition and the spirit of emulation be encouraged, and when repressed? The possibility of too much fault-finding making a child callous. If mere common sense discovers so many subjects, what number may

not learning and wisdom discover when their attention shall be turned in this direction?

The “nursery-girl” topic might come up again, and be considered in its moral and intellectual aspects. Some mothers see their small children only once or twice a day, while the nurse is with them constantly. This fact might be made strikingly significant by placing it side by side with Horace Mann’s words: “In regard to children, all precept and example, all kindness and harshness, all rebuke and commendation, all forms, indeed, of direct or indirect education, affect mental growth, just as dew and sun and shower, or untimely frost, affect vegetable growth. Their influences are integrated and made one with the soul. They enter into spiritual combination with it, never afterward to be wholly uncompounded,” — also with a previously quoted assertion, founded on actual experiments, that “it is the medium in which a child is habitually immersed” which helps most in forming the child’s character. The kind of reading which falls into the hands of the young would be found to be a lecture topic of appalling interest. Striking illustrations for such lectures could be taken from the advertisements and statistics of story-paper and dime-novel publishers. The illus-

trated papers which can be bought and are bought by youth are crammed to overflowing with details of vice and barbarity. They have columns headed "A Mélange of Murder," "Fillicide, or a Son killing a Father," "Lust and Blood," "Fiendish Assassination," "Particulars of the Hanging of John C. Kelly," "Carving a Darky," "An Interesting Divorce Case in Boston," "A Band of Juvenile Jack Sheppards." And the pictures match the reading,— a jealous lover shooting a half-naked girl; a father murdering his family; an inquisitive youth peering into a ladies' dressing-room. If the contents of these papers are bad for us to hear of, what must they be to the youth who read them? Dime novels are advertised in these same papers as being issued once a month, and supplied by all the news companies, "Sensational stories from the pens of gifted American novelists!" "The Sharpers' League," "Lyte, or the Suspected One," "The Pirate's Isle," "Darrell, the Outlaw," "The Night Hawks, containing Midnight Robbery, Plots dark and deep," "The Female Poisoner," "Etne of the Angel Face and Demon Heart," "The Cannibal Kidnappers, a Sequel to the Boy Mutineers," "Life for Life, or the Spanish Gipsy Girl," "Tom Wildrake's School-days." Some of

these papers are entitled “Boys’ and Girls’” weeklies. The old saying is, “Build doves’ nests, and doves will come.” What kind of “nests” are being built by the young readers of these publications, of which it may almost literally be said, “no boy can do without one”? The boy at school has one between the leaves of his geography; the boy riding, or sailing, or resting from his work or his play, draws one from his pocket; the grocer’s boy comes forward to serve you, tucking one under his jacket. In the way of statistics, it might be stated that nineteen tons of obscene publications and plates for the same were seized at one time in New-York City. Should representatives of “our best families” ask, “How does this affect us and ours?” it could be answered that catalogues of academies and boarding-schools are obtained, and that these publications are then forwarded to pupils by mail.

Topics of this kind would naturally suggest those of an opposite kind, as modes of awakening in children an appreciation of the beauty, the sublimity, the wonderfulness, of the various objects in the world of nature; also of cultivating in their minds a taste for the beautiful and the refined in art, literature, manners, conversation. These considera-

tions could be effectively introduced into a lecture or lectures "On the Building of Doves' Nests." Is it not "essential" that mothers should have the time, the facilities, and the knowledge necessary for accomplishing what is here suggested, and that they be made sensible of its importance? But there is many a busy mother now who can scarcely "take time" to look out when her children call her to see a rainbow, much less to walk out with them among natural objects.

The object of these lectures should not be to teach any particular theories on which to act in the management of children, but to so instruct, so to enlighten young women, that when the time for action comes they will act intelligently. With the majority of women the management of children is a mere "getting along." In this "getting along" they often have recourse to deception; thus teaching deceitfulness. They are often unfair, punishing on one occasion what they smile at or wink at on another; thus teaching injustice. They lose self-control, and punish when in anger; thus setting examples of violence and bad temper. It is probable that a young woman who had been educated with a view to her vocation would be more likely to act wisely in these emergencies and in her general

course of management, than one who had not. There would be more chance of her taking pains to consider. She would not work so blindly, so aimlessly, so "from hand to mouth," as do some of our mothers.

Such enlightenment is an enlightenment for which any good mother will be thankful. She wants it to work with. She feels the need of it every hour in the day. Why, then, is it not given to young women as a part of their education, and as the most important part? They are instructed in almost every thing else. They can give you the areas, population, boundaries, capitals, and peculiarities of far-away and insignificant provinces ; the exact measurements of mountain ranges, lakes, and rivers ; statistics, in figures, of the farthest isle beyond the farthest sea. They are lectured on the antediluvians, on the Milky Way, on the Siamese, Japanese, North Pole, on all the ologies ; on the literature, modes of thought, and modes of life, of extinct races. They can converse in foreign tongues ; they are familiar with dead languages, and with the superstitions, observances, and quarrels of certain races, barbarous or otherwise, who existed thousands of years ago. In fact, they are taught, after some fashion, almost every thing except what their life-work will

specially require. Little will it avail a mother in her seasons of perplexity or of bereavement to remember “what wars engaged Rome after the Punic wars, and how many years elapsed before she was mistress of the Mediterranean.” This and the following questions are taken from the “Examination Papers” of a popular “Institute” for young ladies.

“ Give names and dates of the principal engagements of the Persian wars, with the names of the great men of Greece during that period.”

“ Show cause, object, and result of the Peloponnesian war.”

“ Give names and attributes of the seven kings of Rome.”

“ After the kings were driven out, what does the internal history mainly consist of ? ”

“ What were the social, and what were the civil wars ? ”

Common sense might ask why every child born in the nineteenth century must go to work so solemnly to learn the minute particulars of those old wars ! Still common sense would not declare such knowledge to be altogether worthless ; it would only suggest that woman wants the kind which will help her in her special department, more than she wants this

kind. Said a lady in my hearing, — an only child reared in the very centre of wealth and culture, — “ I was most carefully educated ; but, when I came to be the mother of children, I found myself utterly helpless.”

It is gratifying to know that in regard to these matters common sense has very respectable learning and wisdom on its side. A celebrated writer and thinker says, “ If by some strange chance not a vestige of us descended to the remote future, save a pile of our school-books, or some college examination papers, we may imagine how puzzled an antiquary of the period would be on finding in them no indication that the learners were ever likely to be parents. ‘ This must have been the curriculum for their celibates,’ we may fancy him concluding : ‘ I perceive here an elaborate preparation for many things ; especially for reading the books of extinct nations (from which, indeed, it seems clear that these people had very little worth reading in their own tongue), but I find no reference whatever to the bringing up of children. They could not have been so absurd as to omit all training for this gravest of responsibilities. Evidently, then, this was the school-course of one of their monastic orders.’ Seriously, is it not an astonishing fact, that though

on the treatment of offspring depend their lives or their deaths, and their moral welfare or ruin, not one word on such treatment is ever given to those who will hereafter be parents ? Is it not monstrous, that the fate of a new generation should be left to the chances of unreasoning custom, impulse, fancy, joined with the suggestions of ignorant nurses and the prejudiced counsel of grandmothers ? To tens of thousands that are killed, add hundreds of thousands that survive with feeble constitutions, and millions that grow up with constitutions not so strong as they should be, and you will have some idea of the curse inflicted on their offspring by parents ignorant of the laws of life. With cruel carelessness they have neglected to learn any thing about these vital processes which they are unceasingly affecting by their commands and prohibitions ; in utter ignorance of the simplest physiological laws, they have been, year by year, undermining the constitutions of their children, and have so inflicted disease and premature death not only on them but on their descendants. Consider the young mother and her nursery legislation. But a few years ago she was at school, where her memory was crammed with words, names, and dates ; where not one idea was given her respecting the

methods of dealing with the opening mind of childhood. The intervening years have been passed in practising music, in fancy work, in novel-reading, and in party-going ; no thought having been yet given to the grave responsibilities of maternity. And now see her with an unfolding human character committed to her charge,—see her profoundly ignorant of the phenomena with which she has to deal, undertaking to do that which can be done but imperfectly even with the aid of the profoundest knowledge. . . . Lacking knowledge of mental phenomena, with their causes and consequences, her interference is frequently more mischievous than absolute passivity would have been."

This writer, it seems, would also have young men educated with a view to their probable duties as fathers, and so, of course, would we all ; and much might be said on this point, especially of its bearing on the solution of our problem : still, as Mr. Frothingham said in a recent address, "The mother, of all others, is the one to foster and control the individuality of the child." It was "good mothers" which Napoleon needed in order to secure the welfare of France. "Such kind of women as are the mothers of great men," is a significant sentence I have seen somewhere in print. In fact, so much

depends on mothers, that there seems no possible way by which our problem can be fully solved until the right kind of mothers shall have been raised up, and their children be grown to maturity.

## CHAPTER IX.

## WAYS OF IMMEDIATE ESCAPE.

BUT is there no possible way by which mothers now living may escape from this present unsatisfactory condition? Yes; but not many will adopt it. Simplicity in food and in dress would set free a very large number. A great part of what are called their "domestic" occupations consists in the preparation of food which is worse than unnecessary. A great part of their sewing work consists in fabricating "trimmings" which are worse than useless, even considering beauty a use, which it is. Let these simplify their cooking and their dressing, and time for culture will appear, and for them our problem be solved. We preach against the vice of intemperance, and with reason. Let us ask ourselves if intemperance in eating and in dressing is not even more to be deplored. The former brings ruin to comparatively a few: by means of the latter the

whole tone of mind among women is lowered ; and we have seen what it costs to lower the tone of mind among women. We must remember that not only is the condition of the mother reflected in the organism of her child, but that the child is taught by the daily example of its mother what to look upon as the essentials of life. "I feel miserable," said a feeble house-mother, just recovering from sickness ; "but I managed to crawl out into the kitchen, and stir up a loaf of cake." Now, why should a sick woman have crawled out into the kitchen, to stir up a loaf of cake? Was that a paramount duty, — one which demanded the outlay of her little all of strength? This is the obvious inference, and one which children would naturally draw. A lady of intelligence, on hearing this case stated, expressed the opinion that the woman did no more than her duty. Said this lady, "If her husband liked cake, it was her duty to provide it for him at whatever sacrifice of health on her own part."

Now, it seems reasonable to suppose that an affectionate couple would have a mutual understanding in regard to such matters. It seems reasonable to suppose that an affectionate husband would rather partake of plain fare in the society of a wife with sufficient health and spirits to be companionable,

than to eat his cake alone while she was recovering from the fatigue of making it.

Speaking of inferences, it is obvious what ones a child will draw from seeing its mother deprive herself of sleep and recreation and reading-time in order to trim a suit *à la mode*. And these inferences of children concerning essentials have a mighty bearing on our problem. Some ladies defend the present elaborate style of dress on the ground that it affords the means of subsistence to sewing-girls. There is something in this, but I think not so much as appears. Go into the upper lofts where much of this sewing is done, and what will you find? You will find them crowded with young girls, bending over sewing-machines, or over work-tables, breathing foul air, and, in some cases, engaged in conversations of the most objectionable character. Their pay is ridiculously small,—a dollar and a half for doing the machine-work on a full-trimmed fashionable “suit.” I learned this, and about the conversations, from a worker at one of these establishments. Clothes, especially outside clothes, they must have and will have; consequently the saving must be made on food. Some, too poor to pay board, hire attic rooms, and pinch themselves in both fire and food. They

often carry their dinner, say bread, tea, and confectioner's pie, and remain at the store all day. They are liable to be thrown among vile associates ; they are exposed to many temptations. They enrich their employers, but not themselves. In dull seasons their situation is pitiable, not to say dangerous. A great number of them come from country homes. Of these, many might live comfortably in those homes, and others might earn a support by working in their neighbors' houses, where they would be considered as members of the families, have good lodging and nourishing food, and where their assistance is not only desired, but in some cases actually suffered for. They prefer the excitements of city life. (Of course, these remarks do not apply to all of them.) Fashionable ladies may not employ shop-girls directly or indirectly, but their example helps to make a market for the services of these girls. Another consideration is, that the poor seamstress who is benefited directly by the money of fashionable ladies is taught as directly, by their example, false views as to the essentials of life ; so that what helps in one way hinders in another. All this should be considered by those who bring forward "sewing-girls' needs" as an argument for an elaborate style of dress. Even were this argument

sound, it fails to cover the case. A very large proportion of our women have not money enough to hire their sewing done, and it is upon these that the wearisome burden falls. To keep up, to vary with the varying fashion, they toil in season and out of season. Day after day you will see them at their work-tables, their machines, their lap-boards ; ripping, stitching, turning, altering, furbishing ; complaining often of sideache, of backache, of headache, of aching all over ; denying themselves outdoor air and exercise and reading-time, — and all because they consider dressing fashionably an essential of life. With them, what costs only time, health, and strength, costs nothing.

Think of this going on all over the country. Think of the sacrifices it involves. In view of them, it really seems as if those who can afford to hire their sewing done should give up elaborate trimmings just for example's sake. To be sure, this is not striking at the foundation. To be sure, this is not the true way of bringing about a reform. But, while waiting to get at the foundation, would it not be well to work a little on the surface for the sake of immediate results? You would refrain from taking a glass of wine if, by so doing, you made abstinence easier for your weaker brother or

sister. Why not consider the weakness of these toiling sisters? It is not their fault that they do not see what are the true issues of life. They have not been wisely educated. If the wealthy and influential would adopt a simple style of dress, their doing so would be the means of relieving many overburdened women immediately, and of helping them to solve the problem we are considering. It is not wicked to dress simply, and no principle would be sacrificed. Neither would good taste. Indeed, the latter is opposed to excessive ornamentation, whether in dress, manners, speech, or writing. Long live beauty! Long live taste! Long live the “æsthetic side”! But simplicity does not necessarily imply plainness, nor homeliness, nor uncouthness. There can be a simplicity of adornment. I am aware that acting for example’s sake is not a sound principle of action; but it is a question if it be not duty in this particular case. A lady physician of large practice once said to me, “I see, among poor girls, so much misery caused by this,” — meaning this rage for excessive trimming, — “that I can scarcely bring myself to wear even one plain fold.” If it be asked, Should we not also relinquish costly fabrics, and the elegant appointments of our dwellings? it may be answered,

that "poor girls" commonly give up these as being entirely out of their reach. They buy low-priced material, and call the dress cheap which costs only their time, their strength, their sleep, and their opportunities for reading and recreation.

We all know that the right way is to so educate woman that she will be sensible in these matters. The external life is but the natural outgrowth of the internal. It is of no use cutting off follies and fripperies from the outside so long as the heart's desire for them remains. This heart's desire must have something better in its place,—something higher, nobler, worthier. This something is enlightenment; and to effect the exchange we shall have to begin at the beginning, and enlighten the mothers. Follies and fripperies, in cooking or dressing, will give way before enlightenment, just as do the skin paintings, tattooings, gaudy colors, glass beads and tinsel, and other absurdities of savage tribes; just as have done the barbaric customs and splendors of the barbaric ages. Woman is not quite out of her barbaric stage yet. At any rate, she is not fully enlightened. The desire for that redundancy of adornment which is in bad taste still remains. In the process of evolution, the nose-ring has been cast off; but rings are still hooked into the flesh of the

ears, and worn with genuine barbaric complacency. When women are all wisely educated, our problem will melt away and disappear. The wisely-educated woman will, of her own accord, lay hold on essentials and let go unessentials. She will do the best thing with her time, the best thing with her means. She may conform to fashion, but will not feel obliged to do so. In fact, when women become enlightened, non-conformity to fashion will be all the fashion. Right of private judgment in the matter will be conceded. All women shall dress as seemeth to them good; and no woman shall say, or think, or look, "Why do ye so?" Those having insufficient means and time will be so wise as not to feel compelled to dress like those who have plenty of both.

Meanwhile, as an immediate measure of relief, suppose a dozen or twenty mothers in each town should agree to adopt a simple yet tasteful style of dress for themselves and their little girls. This would lighten, at once, their heavy burden of work, give them "time to read," and would be a benefit to those little girls in many ways.

Another way of immediate escape is by making the present race of husbands aware that their wives are being killed, or crazed, with hard work and care,

especially husbands in the small towns and villages, and more especially farmers. In regard to these last, it is no exaggeration to say that their wives in many cases work like slaves. Indeed, this falls short of the truth, for slaves have not the added burden of responsibility. As things are now, the woman who marries a farmer often goes, as one may say, into a workhouse, sentenced to hard labor for life.

When these husbands permit their wives to "over-work," it is not from indifference, but from sheer ignorance. They don't know, they don't begin to conceive, of the labor there is in "woman's work." It is true that neither are merchant-princes aware of what it costs their wives to superintend the complicated arrangements of their establishments ; to see that all the wheels, and the wheels within wheels, revolve smoothly, and that comfort and style go hand in hand ; but let us consider now the farmers' wives, toiling on, and on, and on, in country towns, East, West, and all the way between. Their husbands, in not a few cases, are able to hire at least the drudgery done, and would if they only knew. A young woman from a New Hampshire village, herself an invalid from hard work, speaking to me of her mother, said, "She suffers every thing with her

back. When she stoops down to the oven to attend to the pies, she has to hold on to her back, hard, to get up again." I said, "Why, I shouldn't think your father would let her make them."—"Oh," said she, "father don't understand. He's hard." One day I was sitting in the house of a young woman,—a fragile, delicate creature, scarcely able to lift the baby she was holding,—when her husband came in. He was a working man, tall and robust looking. He walked toward the pantry. "You mustn't cut a pie," the little wife called out laughing. Then turning to me, she said, with a sort of appealing, piteous glance, "He don't understand how hard it is for me to make pies." I know a young woman, not a strong woman, who, with a family of very little children, does her own work, and makes from one to two dozen pies at a common baking, "'cause hubby loves 'em.'" I know another, similarly situated, who gives her husband pies at breakfast as well as at other meals, because "he was brought up to them at home." Now, all these "hubbies" are loving "hubbies," but — they do not know. A friend of mine, an elderly woman lately deceased, came to her death (so her neighbors said) by hard work. "Killed with work," was the exact expression they used. She was a dear good

woman; a person of natural refinement, of strict integrity, of a forgiving spirit, intelligent, sweet-tempered, gentle-mannered; everybody loved her. Her husband is a well-to-do farmer. He inherited money and lands, and has them still. His wife, who was every thing to him, whom he could not bear out of his sight, and for whom, if he had known, he would have sacrificed money and lands, is gone. But—he did not know. “Mother” never complained. “Mother” did the cooking, did the washing, scrubbed the floors. They had “company forever,” the neighbors said. “Mother” received, with smiling hospitality, all who came. Help was hard to procure; still help might and would have been procured had the husband known the case to be, as it certainly was, a case of life or death. But—he did not know: so “mother” died of work and care.

You sometimes see a woman, after hurrying through her forenoon’s work, sink down entirely prostrated, too tired to speak a loud word, every nerve in her body quivering. The jar of a footfall upon the floor sets her “all a-tremble.” As dinner-time approaches, you see that woman stepping briskly about the house, a light in her eye, a flush on her cheek, vivacity in her motions. She is “living on

excitement ; " " it is ambition which keeps her up." Her husband, coming in to his dinner, takes her briskness and vivacity as matters of course, regarding her, probably, as a woman who has nothing to do but to stay in the house all day. He has no more idea of the condition of that woman than her infant has.

There are thousands of husbands, who, if they knew, would lift the burden of at least the heaviest drudgery from their wives, thus giving them longer leases of life. But, as a rule, wives keep their bad feelings to themselves. They know that " a complaining woman " is a term of reproach. They are exhorted in newspaper after newspaper to " make home happy by cheerful looks and words." They wish to do so. With a laudable desire to save money, they spend themselves, and " get along " without help. It is truly a getting-along, not a living. Sometimes, however, they are obliged to mention their feebleness, or their ailments, as reasons for neglect of duty. It is astonishing how little importance, in many cases, the husband attaches to the facts thus stated. Apparently he considers ailments either as being natural to woman, or as afflictions sent upon her by the Lord. He seems to look upon her as a sort of machine, which

is liable to run down, but which may easily be wound up by a little medicine, and set going again. If the medicine does not set her going again, he brings her pastor to pray for her; if she dies, he says, "The Lord hath taken her away." All this because he does not know. When husbands are enlightened on this important point, this solemn point, they will insist on less work for women. Less work implies more leisure, and with leisure comes time for culture.

Another step towards the immediate solution of our problem is, to establish the fact that woman stands on a level with man, and is neither an appendage nor a "relict." Relict, it is true, only means that which is left; still we do not hear James Smith called the "relict" of Hannah Smith. Standing on the same level does not imply a likeness, but simply a natural equality,—equality, for instance, in matters of conscience, judgment, and opinion. It is often said, that, as a barbarous race progresses toward civilization, its women are brought nearer and nearer to an equality with its men. Thus in the barbaric stage woman *is* an appendage to man, existing solely for his pleasure and convenience. She is then at her lowest. As civilization progresses, she rises gradually nearer an equality with man.

When she is all the way up, when her individuality is recognized as man's is recognized, then civilization, in this respect, will have done its perfect work. Woman among us is almost all the way up, but not quite. She is still considered, and considers herself, a little bit inferior by nature. We see at once how this bears upon our question. Just so much as woman is considered inferior, just so much less importance is attached to the nature of her occupations and acquirements. It is all right enough that an inferior being should devote herself to follies, or to drudgeries, or to catering to fastidious appetites. These duties are on a level with her capacities; for these she was created, and for these culture is unneeded. When civilization shall have finished its work, so far as to bring woman up to her true position of equality with man,—equality in matters of conscience, judgment, opinion, and privileges,—then will man be able to put off from his shoulders the responsibility of deciding what is, and what is not, proper for her to do. He has carried double weight long and uncomplainingly, and should in justice to himself be relieved. Equals need not decide for equals. Woman will take up the burden he throws off, and decide for herself. We must proceed cautiously here, for there are lions in the

path. Being free to choose, she may choose to take interest in such kinds of public affairs as have a bearing on her special duty. We are interested in this, remember, because whatever affects her special duty affects the solution of our problem.

Now let us ask, under our breaths, what are public affairs? The public consists of individuals. If there were no individuals there would be no public. Public affairs, then, are only individual's affairs, managed collectively, because that is the most convenient way of managing them. Their good or bad management affects the comfort of men, women, and children. Let us ask, why, simply by being christened "public affairs," should they be turned into a great, horrid bugaboo, too dangerous for women even to think of? Schools are a part of public affairs, and one would suppose it to be a part of woman's vocation to ascertain what is the influence of these schools on the children she is bringing up; to learn whether they are working with her or against her. Cases might arise concerning choice of teachers, hours of study, kinds of study, ventilation, and so forth, in which it would be her duty, as a child-trainer, to express an opinion: like the following one, for instance, which comes to us in the newspapers, as "criminal negligence in the affairs at the

Mount Pleasant Schoolhouse, by which about a dozen children have died of disease, others passed through severe sickness, and not a few, including teachers, made temporary invalids, or infected with boils or scrofulous sores, caused by breathing the polluted air that has infested the building from neglected earth-closets. The Board of Health officially announced that this was the cause of the sickness, and recommended the removal of the earth-closets. The janitor of the building, it seems, is incompetent, and holds his place only because he is also a member of the School Board; which suggests the query whether men unfit for janitors are usually placed on the Nashua School Committee. . . . Five of the lads who died were among the the brightest scholars in the public schools. The building has not yet been properly renovated.”

Shall woman’s sons be thus destroyed, and woman be powerless to interfere?

In urgent cases like this, it might become the duty of the mother to express her opinion by dropping a slip of paper with a name written on it into a hat or a box. It would even be possible to conceive of emergencies in which these slips of paper would so affect some vital issue, — as, for instance, the choice or removal of the janitor who will furnish the air

for her children to breathe, — that the father would stay with the children while the mother went out to thus express her opinion.

Then, indeed, would the climax be reached ! Then would that state of things so long foretold have come to pass : the husband takes care of the children, while the wife goes out to vote ! Then would the funny artist snatch up his pencil, and the funny editor his quill. It has always been a mystery to me where the laugh came in on this joke. True, it is not his calling ; but what is there so very incongruous in a father's "taking care" of his own children ? Fathers love their children, and will toil night and day for them, even for the very small ones. Is there any thing ridiculous, then, in their taking them in their arms, and overlooking their childish sports ? A man may take a lamb in his arms without losing an iota of his dignity, and without being caricatured in any one of our weeklies. It is quite time that these precious little human lambs ceased to be the subjects of scoffs and sneers.

But we must pass on from this part of our subject, and glance at one or two other ways of immediate escape from the present unsatisfactory state of things. See how quickly such escape might be

made by a truly enlightened family. First, they hold counsel together, men and women, all desiring the same object. Question, How shall "mother" find time for culture? Say the male members, "Mother's work must be lessened,—must be: there is a necessity in the case." — "But how?" — "Well, investigate. Begin with the cooking. Let's see what we can do without." Three cheers for our side! When man begins to see what cooking he can do without, woman will begin to see her time for culture. Dinners are summoned to the bar, examined, and found guilty of too great variety and of too elaborate desserts. Sentence, less variety, and fruit for dessert instead of pies, or even pudding: exception filed here in favor of simple pudding when first course is scanty or lacking. Suppers summoned, tried, and found guilty of too great variety and too much richness; sentenced to omit pies for life, and admonished by judge not to cling too closely to work-compelling cake. The time thus rescued from the usurper, Cooking, is handed over to "mother," the true heir, to have and to hold.

Or, suppose the question to be one of health. " 'Mother' works too hard. She will wear herself out." — "She doesn't complain." — "That makes

no difference. She must have help." — "Where is the money coming from to pay the help?" — "Make it; earn it; dig for it; do without something; give up something; sell something; live on bread and water. Is there any thing that will weigh in the balance against 'mother's' life? We shall feel grief when she is worn out; why not when she is wearing out? We would make sacrifices to bring her back; why not to keep her with us?" The truth is, that heretofore the wrong things have been counterbalanced. Placing simple food in one scale, and dainties in the other, of course the latter outweighs the former; but place "mother's" needs and "mother's" life in one scale, and dainties in the other, and then will the latter fly up out of sight, and never be heard from any more. Councils of this kind, we must remember, are not to become general until the requirements of "woman's mission" are generally understood, and until a great many men are made aware that a great many women are killing themselves by hard work and care, and until academic professors perceive that it is wiser to give a young woman the knowledge she will want to use than that which is given for custom's sake. But how is this general enlightenment to be effected? I don't know, unless the lecturer

makes these subjects the theme of his lecture, or the poet the burden of his verse, or the minister the text of his discourse. Not proper to be brought into the church? Why not? A great deal about heathen women is brought into the church. Are American women of less account than they? Does not the condition of our women call for missionary effort? True, American wives do not sacrifice themselves for their deceased husbands, but we have seen that they are sacrificed. There is here no sacred river into which the mother hurls her new-born babe; but it has been shown, that, because American mothers are left in ignorance, a large proportion of their children drop from their arms into the dark river of death.

Should any object that such subjects are below the dignity of the church, we might reply that the church is bound to help us for the reason that the present state of things is partly owing to her efforts. The ministers of the church in past times have labored to convince people that this life for its own sake is of little account; that we were placed here, not to develop the faculties and enjoy the pleasures which pertain to this stage of our existence, but solely to prepare for another. They have taught that we sicken and die prematurely because God

wills it, not because we transgress his laws. To those suffering physically from such transgression they have said in effect, "Pray God to relieve your pain, for he sent it upon you."

## CHAPTER X.

## MEANS OF ESCAPE ALREADY IN OPERATION.

THREE effective means by which the desired change may be accomplished are, first, that women meet regularly for the purpose of discussing such matters as especially affect them and their mission; second, that they have a paper for this same object; third, that representative women from different sections of the country come together occasionally, and compare views on these matters. Such means we already have in the "Woman's Club," the "Woman's Journal," and the "Woman's Congress."

The first of these institutions is not what the uninitiated, judging from its name, might suppose. The writer, though not a club-member, can affirm of her own knowledge, that at the weekly gatherings questions are discussed which have a direct bearing on the interests of the family and household. From

these gatherings, members return to their homes strengthened, refreshed, enlightened. All teachers can testify that from teachers' conventions they go back to work with awakened interest, fresh zeal, and with newly-acquired ideas. The contact of mind with mind has invigorated them. They have all taken from each other, yet none have been losers, but all have been gainers. Every school which lost its teacher for a season gained tenfold by that teacher's absence. So it is with the club meetings. Women leave their homes to consider how the standard of those homes may be raised. I happened to be present once when the discussion was upon "The amount and kind of obedience to be exacted from children ;" and I said to myself, Now, this seems the right thing exactly. How natural, how sensible, for women to meet and confer on such subjects as this, each one bringing her perplexities or her suggestions ; the old giving their experience, the young profiting thereby ! What better could mothers do for their children than thus to meet occasionally and hold counsel together ?

Still people in general do not take this view of the case. People in general are satisfied if a mother is bodily present with her children, and do not trouble themselves as to her enlightenment.

Look at the last Woman's Congress, side by side with three other large conventions held in this country not so very long ago, and compare its purposes with theirs. The questions which occupied the members of one of the three related chiefly to articles of belief, and to those particular articles of belief in which they all believed. It was stated beforehand, that the great object to be attained was unity, and that no subjects would come up which, by calling out opposing opinions, might mar the harmony of the occasion.

Another convention occupied much of its time in deciding whether those of the denomination who sit at communion with others of the denomination who have sat at communion with a person who has not been wholly immersed, shall be fellowshipped by the denomination.

An enthusiastic member of still another convention publishes a long and glowing account of its proceedings, in which account occurs the following curious paragraph :—

“ During the discussions in convention, the presentation of petitions and memorials and drafts of canons, the reports of the committees on canons, the amendments and substitutes, the transit of canons back and forth between the two houses, and

finally, the conference committee, the slowly developing action of the convention was under such confusion and cloud, that it was and may yet be difficult for many, especially those at a distance, to make up their mind as to what finally took place.” The object of this paragraph was to account for some wrong impressions made by the published reports.

I submit that what humanity wants to know is, how to live rightly, and that it is suffering for this knowledge. It is not suffering to know all about “altar cloths” and “eucharistic lights,” and “colored chasubles” and “the use of the viretta in worship.” It is not suffering to know if certain persons can partake of the Lord’s Supper with other certain persons who have partaken with other certain persons. It is not suffering to know that a large number of individuals believe exactly alike, and exactly as did their ancestors. How are all these agreements and disageements to help a poor fellow who has inherited certain proclivities, and wishes to be rid of them, and that his children may overmaster them?

Humanity does want to know, right away, how to keep itself alive and well and doing well. It wants brought up for consideration the wrongs which

oppress it, the evils which defile it, the crimes which degrade it; to have their causes investigated, and their remedies suggested. This is live work; and it is such work as this which occupied the attention of the Woman's Congress. No uncertain sound there. Those "at a distance," those at the very antipodes, might "make up their mind" that its members were asking themselves, what have we, as wives and mothers, to do with these things? While other conventions are "agreeing," and "fellowshipping," and wrangling over "altar cloths," and "virettas," the Woman's Congress considers matters which have an immediate practical bearing on the welfare of human beings. While the community is working away at the surface, with its prisons, its police, its hangmen, its societies for the suppression of vice, its schools for reform, its homes for the fallen (no doubt often with good results), the Woman's Congress strikes at the foundation, and by pointing out "The Influence of Literature upon Crime," and the telling effect of "Pre-natal Influences," suggests how vice may be prevented, character right-formed, and humanity kept from falling. It inquires, "How can Woman best oppose Intemperance?" It considers those two vast underlying subjects, "The Education of Women," and "The Physical Educa-

tion of our Girls ; " while it by no means overlooks those unfortunates whom society sets apart, and labels " fallen women."

In regard to our problem, if any light has been thrown, if " the word " has been guessed, I should say " the word " is " enlightenment," — enlightenment of the community as to the requirements of woman's mission, enlightenment of woman herself as a preparation for that mission. What say you, friends? Shall our women receive such enlightenment? and shall it come in to the finishing or supplementary part of their education (so called)?

True, this will cause innovations ; but is it *therefore* objectionable? No one will call our present system of education a perfect one ; why, then, should there not be innovations? " Why, indeed," asks a writer in " The Atlantic," " except that the training of their children is the last thing about which parents and communities will exert themselves to vigorous thought and independent action? No more striking proof of the inertia of the human mind can be found," he says, " than the fact. . . that for many generations the true philosophy of teaching has had its prophets and apostles, and yet that substantially we are training our children in the same old blundering way." The fault of this " old

blundering way," it seems to me, is its one-sidedness. It educates only the intellect. Is this the right way? Surely the moral nature is also educable. Indeed, if the mind is trained to act energetically, so much more should the moral sense be trained to control the workings of that mind. Then, since the world, we hope, is outgrowing battles, why is it considered *essential* that we inform ourselves so particularly, so minutely, so statistically, concerning battles fought so long, long, long ago? Does the process hasten on the time of beating swords into ploughshares? Suppose each generation, as it comes on to the stage, does inform itself thus minutely: what, in the long-run, does humanity gain thereby?

But these considerations open up subjects too vast and too important to be even mentioned in these closing chapters. Will not you who know the inevitable influence of the mother upon her children,—will you not see to it that some portion of the time devoted to her education is spent in preparing her for her life-work? Can you think of any surer way than this by which good citizens may be raised up for our country? Wickedness abounds. It is omnipresent. Every day,—yes, twice a day,—the newspapers bring us tidings of

corruption, fraud, villany, not only in low places, but in high places ; in exceedingly high places. Crime is on the increase. Public officials, supported and trusted by the people, hesitate not to defraud the people. Individuals in good and regular standing socially and religiously, church-members, sabbath-school teachers, defraud their nearest friends.

Nobody can tell whom to trust. If, then, neither church, nor state, nor social position, nor any outside influence, has power to make men honest, where shall we look for such power? We must look to an inside influence. The restraining power, in order to be effective in all cases, must proceed from the character of the individual ; and the character of the individual is formed to a very great degree by early training ; and early training comes from—women. So here we are again down to our working ground.

Let us hope that innovations will be made. Let us hope that at no distant day it will be thought as important for a young person to be made a good member of society as to be able to cipher in the “rule of three,” in “alligation medial” and “alligation alternate.” A recent writer, a professor in the University of Pennsylvania, urges “the importance of incorporating into our public school systems such

studies and such training as will tend to educate men for their place in the body politic." He says, "A line of teaching which concerns matters of more importance to society than all the ordinary branches of knowledge put together is allowed to have no formal provision made for it." This writer recommends the study of biographies. In Locke's system good principles were to be cared for first, intellectual activity next, and actual knowledge last of all.

Suppose the young women of thirty years ago had been thoroughly instructed in hygienic laws: would not the effects of such instruction be perceptible in our present health-rates and death-rates? Let us begin now to affect the health-rates and death-rates of thirty years hence. And it will do no harm to instruct young men also in such matters. Even while I am writing these pages, a State Board of Health report comes to me, in which it is shown by facts and figures how our death-rates are affected by ignorance,—ignorance as exhibited in the locating, building, and ventilating of dwelling-houses, drainage, situation of wells, planting of trees, choice of food and cooking of the same, as well as in the management of children. Can any subjects comprised in any school course compare in

importance with these? For humanity's sake, let our young people take time enough from their geographies and Latin dictionaries to learn how to keep themselves alive! It is possible too, that, if the young women of thirty years ago had been enlightened on the subject of moral and mental training, our present crime rates might be less than they are, and dishonesty and dishonor in high places and in low places be less frequent.

Mr. Whittier tells the story of a man in a certain town, who desired the removal of an old building — an almshouse, I think — from a certain locality. As the quickest way of accomplishing this, he gave a man a dollar a day on condition that this man should do nothing else but talk from morning to night with various people on the subject of having that building moved. And it was moved. The old building we have to move is made up of prejudices, ignorance, settled opinions, and firmly-established customs, and it is therefore quite time we were beginning our work. Remember the tremendous importance of our object. An Englishman, Lord Rosebury, in a recent address, insists on a special preparation for the hereditary rulers who sit in Parliament; and, if those who are to rule mind need this, how much more do they need it who are to stamp mind, and give it its first direction!

Horace Mann shall close this chapter with one of his impressive sentences. Says this truly great man, "If we fasten our eyes upon the effects which education may throw forward into immortal destinies, it is then that we are awed, amazed, over-powered, by the thought that we have been placed in a system where the soul's eternal flight may be made higher or lower by those who plume its tender wings, and direct its early course. Such is the magnitude, the transcendence, of this subject."

## CHAPTER XI.

## SUPPLEMENTARY.

SOME persons have asked, after hearing or reading the foregoing suggestions, "Do not men also work too much and read too little? Is not the influence of *fathers* on their children to be considered? Should not *fathers* be educated for their vocation?" To these questions there can be but one answer. Yes! and the yes cannot be too emphatic. But the paper which formed the nucleus of these chapters was written by a woman at the request of women, to be read before a woman's club assembled to consider the question, "How shall the mother obtain culture?" The very fact that such a question had suggested itself to them, shows that women feel the need of more than their present opportunities for culture. If men feel this need, there is nothing to prevent them from assembling to discuss their unsatisfactory

condition, to devise ways of improving it, to consider their responsibilities, and to inquire how they shall best qualify themselves to fulfil the duties of their vocation. The writer is under the impression that men's clubs do not meet especially with a view to such discussions.

The following paragraphs comprise the first part of a letter published in "The New York Tribune."

"These letters will speak to the hearts of thousands of women all through the country, and particularly to the women "out West," as they have already to my own. This problem has been revolved in my mind again and again, but no clew has appeared by which to solve it; and I have laid it down hopelessly, feeling that there is no alternative but to submit and carry the burden as long as strength endures, and seeing no outlook for the future but in a brief period of old age, when care and labor must come on younger shoulders.

"I want to speak only of the condition of women with whom I am best acquainted,—the wives of farmers in this part of Illinois. Many instances I have known of women who received in the East an education in some cases superior to that of their husbands, but a life of constant care and drudgery has caused them to lose, instead of gain in mental culture, while the husbands have grown away from them; and it is only in subjects of a lower nature that they have a common interest. A man, in his every-day intercourse with other men, and his business calls into all kinds of places and scenes, must be a fool not to receive new ideas, not to

become more intelligent on many subjects. But what can be expected of the wife, almost always at home in the isolated farm-house, in a sparsely settled community, and if poor and struggling with debt, as many are, with no reading except one or two newspapers? If she had a library of books, it would make but little difference, for she has no time to read them. All through the Western country there is an absolute dearth of women's "help." "A girl" can hardly be obtained for love or money. Girls in towns or cities will not go into the country, and country girls are too independent. If they have a father's house, they will not leave it for any length of time, as actual want is not known here in the country. Within a radius of five miles in every direction from my home, where I have lived eight years, I have never known or heard of a family or person suffering for any thing to eat, drink, or wear; and have never had a call for help in that direction. A house-mother of my acquaintance, whose husband owns a "section" farm, suffers much from illness, and has a large family, yet for months has been without any help in her work but that of her little girls,—the oldest not over twelve,—simply because she could not get a servant. The farmers themselves are under less necessity to labor than in many other parts of the country. Farms are comparatively large, and produce large crops, and it pays them to hire laborers. Many farmers work in the field very little, while the wife and mother does the housework not only for her own family, but for from one to three laborers. During the rush of crop raising and harvesting, from April to August, she must be up at four in the morning, and she cannot have her supper until the farm work is all done; and by the time her children are put to bed, the milk cared for, and dishes washed, it is nine o'clock

or after. It is hard for a woman who is hungry for reading to see how much leisure even "hired men" have to read,—their winter and rainy days, their long noonings and evenings, and odd bits of time, while she has comparatively none."

It seems, then, that it is with women as with men: at the West too few workers for the work, at the East too little work for the workers. Now, in the case of the men, there is a regularly organized plan to bring the workers to the work. Laborers are taken from the East where they stand in each other's way, and carried to the West where their services are needed. Why not have some arrangement of this kind for the women? In the present condition of things, destitute women and girls congregate in our cities, and in dull seasons depend on charity for their daily food. In Boston, during the last winter, this charitable feeding was reduced to a system, and, according to published reports, immense numbers were thus supplied with food. It seems a pity that women and girls should starve or live on charity in our cities, while so many families in the West are suffering for their help. Can there not be some concerted plan between these widely separated sections of the country whereby at least a portion of our destitute ones

can be conveyed to the West, and there provided with comfortable homes?

By private letters received from "Tribune" readers living in different parts of the country, it appears that many thoughtful people are considering our problem, and devising ways of solving it. One of these letters says, "You sprinkle rosewater where you should pour aquafortis. You say husbands '*don't know*' that their wives are over-worked. The truth is, they *don't care*." The writer recommends that the laws be so altered as to make second marriages illegal, assuming that, if a man could have only one wife, he would take good care of that one. This is an unpleasant view of the case, and would not be presented here, only that, from the earnest downrightness of the letter, it seems probable that its writer speaks from knowledge, and represents a class,—a small one, let us hope.

Three private letters, coming one from the South, one from the East, and one from the West, declare that woman's present state of invalidism and thralldom to labor is occasioned by the too frequent recurrence of the duties and exhaustive demands of maternity. The writers of the letters affirm, that, in these matters, women are often made

the slaves of sensual husbands, and earnestly entreat that this shall be mentioned among the "causes of the present state of things."

The only sure and lasting remedy for the above-mentioned evils, and others similar to them, is a wise education. When man is wisely educated, and not till then, will he have a proper consideration for woman.

THE  
SCHOOLMASTER'S TRUNK,  
CONTAINING  
PAPERS ON HOME-LIFE IN TWEENIT.

THE papers here collected embody observations made from actual life by a teacher residing in a country village.

A. M. D.

## THE SCHOOLMASTER'S TRUNK.

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### I.

#### THE SLAVES OF THE ROLLING-PIN.

PIES again! Always pies! One, two, three, four, this is the fifth time, within, say, ten days or a fortnight, that, to my knowledge, pies have stood in the way of better things.

First, my hostess, Mrs. Fennel, could not leave to take a ride with me a few mornings ago, because “we are entirely out of—pies.” Mrs. Fennel, poor woman, is far from well, and what with husband, grown-up boys, and two small children, not to mention myself as boarder, she has a large family to cook for, and only her daughter Martha to help do the work. That breezy morning-ride would have raised her spirits; it would have put new life into her: but—pies. (This is one time.) Then Miss Martha, who is fond of reading, declined the loan

of my library-book the other day on account of having to help her mother make — pies. (Two times.) Last evening she could not run up on the hill to see the sun set, because they were trying to get the meat and apple ready over night for — pies. (Three times.) When poor Mrs. Fennel was taken off her work the other day by one of her frequent



ill-turns, Mrs. Melendy came in with offers of assistance.

"Now I can stay just two hours by the clock," said Mrs. Melendy in her sprightly way; "and what shall I take hold of first? Shall I tidy up the room, read to you, bathe your head, make you some good gruel? Or, else, shall I take hold of the mending, or see to the dinner, or what?"

Mrs. Fennel raised her languid lids, and faintly murmured, "Out of pies."

"Dear me!" cried breezy Mrs. Melendy, "I know what that feeling is well enough; and 'tis a dreadful feeling! Why, I should no more dare to set out a meal's victuals without pie than I should dare to fly! For my husband, he must have his piece o' pie to top off with, whatever's on the table." And the sympathizing sister bared her willing arms, and wrestled womanfully with the rolling-pin, I know not how long.

The fifth time was this morning. While sitting in the room adjoining the kitchen, the doors being open between, I heard Martha ask her mother why they could not take a magazine. "I do long for something to read!" said she; "and all we have is just one newspaper a week."

"Oh! we couldn't get much reading-time," said Mrs. Fennel. "If 'tisn't one thing, 'tis another, and sometimes both. There's your father, now, coming with the raisins. These pies will take about all the forenoon." Miss Martha afterward spoke to her father about the magazine.

"We can't afford to spend money on readin'," he answered, in his usual drawling monotone: "costs a sight to live. Now, if we didn't raise

our own pork, we should be hard pushed to git short'nin' for our pies."

Such constant reiteration had made me desperate. I strode to the doorway. "And why *must* we have *pies?*" I demanded in tones of smothered indignation. "Why not bread and butter, with fruits or sauce, instead? Why not drop pies out of the work altogether? Yes, drop them out of the world." Miss Martha was the first to recover from the shock of this startling proposition. "Our men-folks couldn't get along without pies, Mr. McKimber," she said.

"Pie-crust does make a slave of a woman, though," said Mrs. Fennel. "There's nothin' harder than standin' on your feet all the forenoon, rollin' of it out."

"Denno 'bout doin' without pie," drawled Mr. Fennel. "'Pears if bread'n sarse'd be a mighty poor show for somethin' to eat."

"Twould take off the heft of the cookin'," said Mrs. Fennel thoughtfully; "but" (with a sigh) "you couldn't satisfy the men-folks."

I rushed to my chamber in despair. Pie, then, is one of the household gods in Tweenit. But what can I do about it? Something must be done. Suppose I write an "Appeal to Women," and read

it at the sewing-circle, pretending it was taken from a newspaper published in—well, in Alaska, or Australia, or the Orkney Islands. We gentlemen are expected to help along the entertainment in some way.

Hark, now, to the music of the rolling-pin sounding from below! That music shall inspire my

“APPEAL.

“My dear friends, this is an age of inquiry. Can any one tell who first imprisoned our luscious fruits in a paste of grease and flour, baptized the thing with fire, and named it pie? And why is this pie a necessity? That is what confounds me. Mothers of families, hard pressed with work, consume time and strength in endless struggles with the rolling-pin. Fathers of families lengthen their bills to shorten their pies. And all this is to what end? The destruction of health. Every stroke on the board demands strength which is worse than thrown away. Every flake of pastry is so much food which were better left uneaten. And as for the time consumed in this kind of labor, who shall count the hours which are daily rolled away, and chiefly by overburdened women, who complain of ‘no time’ and ‘no constitution’?

“One Saturday forenoon I stood on the hill which commands a view of the village. It was ‘baking-day.’ Being a clairvoyant, I looked through the roofs of the houses, and saw in every kitchen a weary woman, ‘standin’ on her feet,’ rolling, rolling, rolling. Close around some stood their own little children, tugging at their skirts, pleading for that time and attention which rightfully belonged to them. One frail, delicate woman was actually obliged to lie down and rest twice before her task was ended. Another, the mother of an infant not many months old, accomplished hers with one foot on the cradle-rocker.

“We read of despotic countries where galley-slaves were chained to the oar. They, however, after serving their time, went free. Alas for poor woman chained to the rolling-pin! Her sentence is for life.

“We read, too, in ancient story of powerful *genii*, whose control over their slaves was absolute; but this terrible *genius* of the household exacts from its slaves an equally prompt obedience. Is there one among them who dares assert her freedom?

“No: their doom is inevitable. Woman is fore-ordained to roll her life away. Is there no escape? No escape The rolling-board is planted squarely

in the path of every little daughter ; and sooner or later, if her life be spared, she will walk up to it. May we not call it an altar upon which human sacrifices are performed daily ?

“ I observed, on the morning just mentioned, that, in the intervals of pastry-making, the *genius of the long-handled spoon* took control, demanding its customary tribute of eggs, sugar, fat, spices, &c., demanding, also, the usual outlay of time and strength which goes to the compounding of cakes ; and thus, with rolling, beating, and stirring, the forenoon wore away, leaving in each house its accumulation of unwholesome food.

“ You *do* know, madam, that plain living is better for your children ? You *would* like more time to devote to them, or for books, or for recreation ! Then, pray, why not change all this ? Is palate forever to rank above brain ? Change your creed. Say, ‘ I believe in health, in books, in outdoors.’ Why don’t you *rise*, slaves ? Now is your time. Now, when slaves everywhere are demanding their freedom, demand yours.

“ *Company* ? Thanks for teaching me that word. The kind hospitality of this social little village of Tweenit enables me to be ‘ company ’ myself very frequently. And I am aware that much time

is spent in the preparation of viands to set before me, which, for variety and richness, could not be excelled. Shall I add, that whenever, at the bountifully-spread tea-tables, I have attempted to start a rational conversation, the attempt usually has been a failure? Books, public men, public measures, new ideas, new inventions, new discoveries, what is doing for the elevation of women,—on none of these subjects had my entertainers a word to offer. Their talk was, almost without exception, trivial, not to say gossipy.

“Therefore, as a member of that institution, which, as everybody says, ‘makes a sight of work,’ namely, ‘company,’ I protest. I petition for less variety in food, and more culture. And your petitioner further prays, that some of the spices and good things be left out in cooking, and put into the conversation.

“But the ‘men-folks’? Ah, to be sure! Perhaps, after all, it is they who need an appeal”

## II.

## A WORD TO THE “MEN-FOLKS.”

“**W**HAT! do without cake entirely?” cries Mr. Livewell in alarm. By no means, sir! Poor human nature craves something sweet. The trouble lies in making palate king. In many families this is done at terrible cost on the part of the woman. I say terrible, because human sacrifice, in whatever shape, is terrible. And when a woman uses herself up in cooking, and, as a consequence, dies, or half-dies, what is that but human sacrifice?

It was a remark made by Mrs. Melendy which first called my attention to this subject. I had been saying something complimentary of her very interesting little family.

“Ah, yes! Mr. McKimber,” she answered, “if I only knew how to bring them up as they ought to be brought up!”

I suggested that children need, more than anything, a mother’s time and attention.

"But that's just what they can't have," said she ; "for, to tell the truth, the three meals take about all day, so I have to turn off the children."

Mrs. Melendy is the woman whose husband "always wants his piece o' pie to top off with."

I had frequently heard that remark in regard to the "three meals,"—heard it unconcernedly, as relating to a subject in which I had no interest. But when it was repeated that day by Mrs. Melendy, and in that connection, I was suddenly awakened to its full meaning ; and the idea occurred to me that woman might not have been created mainly for the purpose of getting three meals a day. If she were, thought I, what a waste ! for, certainly, a mere meal-getter might have been fashioned out of cheaper material.

I am a curious person for following up any subject to which my attention has been particularly directed ; and, in following up this subject, I have observed closely what goes on daily under the name of housework ; and I find it to be a never-ending succession of steps. Why, such an everlasting treadmill would wear out a strong man ! Not only a tread-mill, but a hand-mill, and a head-mill : for hands must keep time with the feet ; and, as to the head, I have often heard Mrs. Fennel tell Martha

she must keep her *mind* on her work. And, truly, the calculating and contriving demanded by each day's operations require some mind.

Now, I had the idea, before I was awakened by Mrs. Melenyd's remark, that woman's work was not of much account,—just a simple matter of "puttering" about the house. The tempting food which Mrs. Fennel serves up daily stood for a very small part of the labor which it actually represents. And, but for that remark, I might have gone on eating the delicacies spread before me with no more sense of their cost than if they grew on trees, and were shaken down at meal-times. Since my eyes have been opened, however, those delicacies taste too strong of the toil to be relishable; for I see that the rows of pies on the buttery shelves, the mounds of cake, the stacks of doughnuts, do not come there by any magical "sleight o' hand," but are wrought out of the very life of poor Mrs. Fennel,—literally, of her very life. This is not an overstatement, since it is plain to be seen that each day's labor makes demands which her strength is unable to meet. I have observed the languid way in which she drags herself about the house, now and then dropping upon a chair; have noted, at times,—at "hurried" times,—the worn, weary, "all-gone" ex-

pression of her face ; and have heard her take, oh ! very often, those “ long breaths,” which are sure signs of a wearing-out.

Yes, the poor woman is killing herself with over-work. And when she rests, at last, beneath the turf, people will speak of the mysterious Providence which removed a wife and mother in the midst of her usefulness.

It is about time, one would think, to put a stop to this woman-killing. A harsh phrase ? It is not more harsh than the truth ; for, if lightening labor will prolong life, insisting upon unnecessary labor is not far removed from that crime. And this unnecessary labor is insisted upon in one way or another.

For instance, I have Mrs. Fennel’s own word for it, that pies are “ the heft of the cooking ;” have heard her speak of rolling out pastry until she was “ ready to drop,” of beating cake until her arms “ hadn’t one mite of strength left in them.” Yet, to any suggestion that these and other superfluities be omitted, the answer has invariably been, that “ the men-folks wouldn’t be satisfied without them.”

Mr. Fennel is a very good man ; and the boys — young men of eighteen and twenty — are very good boys. If the direct question were asked Mr. Fen-

nel, which he most values, his wife's life, or the nice things she prepares for the table, he would answer with horror, if he answered at all, the former. In reality, however, he answers the latter. It is the same with the boys. The men-folks can't eat cold bread; therefore bisuits are rolled out, cut out, and baked, both morning and night; the men-folks make dependence on their cake; the men-folks must have their "piece o' pie to top off with;" the men-folks like to have a pot of doughnuts to go to.



Now, all these things may gratify the palate; but the point is, are they worth the price that is paid for them? I confess that it fairly makes me shudder, sometimes, to see those strong men sit down at table, and, with appetites sharpened by out-of-door

exercise, sweep off so unthinkingly and unthankingly the results of Mrs. Fennel's long and weary toil. Do they not *taste something* in those delicacies? detect a flavoring that was never set down in any grocer's bill? They probably do not. Long habit has so accustomed them to the flavor of this *essence of life*, this compound extract of backache, headache, exhaustion, prostration, palpitation, that they do not notice its presence. It would be well for them to do so, however; for it is a terribly expensive article.

Oh, no! they don't taste any thing but what may be bought at the grocer's, or raised on the farm. If they did, if the cost of all these dainties were once made clear to our kind-hearted men-folks, they would not only be satisfied without them, but would beg Mrs. Fennel to stop cooking them; for neither Mr. Fennel nor the boys are wanting in affection for her. Whenever, by overwork, she becomes alarmingly ill, they are ready to harness the horse, and go seven miles for the doctor at any time of day or night. Mr. Fennel never spends his money so freely as in medicine for his wife; and the boys seldom come home from the pastures without bringing her mullein, or some kind of herb, to dry. "So thoughtful of them!" the dear woman

remarks with moistened eyes, and cheeks faintly flushed. If they could only be so thoughtful as to consider that rest is better for her than herbs !

All women are not as feeble as Mrs. Fennel ? This is true ; yet she represents a large class. and one which is rapidly increasing. Mothers of families calling themselves well and strong are hard to find. They too commonly either break down and die, or break down and live. Go into almost any town, any country village even, where pure air and other conditions of health abound, and mark in the sharpened, worn, pinched faces of its elderly women, the effects of overwork and unwholesome food.

Work is necessary. I believe in it ; believe in eating too, and in eating what "tastes good," as the phrase is. But to a person of healthy appetite plain food "tastes good," and "topping off" is quite unnecessary. The words "topping off" express the exact truth : implying, that, when the stomach is already full, something is put on the top. (By the way, it is doing this, unless the something be very simple, which spoils the appetite for the next meal.)

No : far be it from me to scorn the pleasures of the palate. I would by no means consider it wicked to eat, semi-occasionally, a bit of cake ;

and there may be times in the year when even pie would be in order. But I protest against making these things the essentials ; against its being taken for granted, that in whatever press for time, — in sickness and in health, in strength and in weakness, in sorrow and in joy, — the table must be spread with this prescribed, though needless, variety of food.

And, as it is the men-folks who are to “be satisfied,” I appeal to them to “be satisfied” with that which requires less of woman’s labor and of woman’s life.

## III.

## CONCERNING COMMON THINGS.

WHOEVER would be tranquil, let him not investigate. Ever since I began inquiring into household affairs, my mind has been disturbed by a doubt—not quite a doubt; call it an uneasiness—as to the mental superiority of the dominant sex. No, it cannot amount to positive doubting. That would be to fly in the face of facts. History proves that the greatest philosophers, the greatest artists, the greatest writers, the greatest thinkers, have been men. If woman has the ability to be as great in these directions, why has she not been as great? There has certainly been time enough,—six thousand years at the lowest calculation.

Well, then, since facts cannot be disputed, there can be no reasonable doubt upon this subject; but—No, I won't say *but*: I won't admit the possibility of a *but*. I will only say that it is very puzzling

and very annoying to have one's daily observations tend to undermine—not undermine, conflict with—one's belief. And it may happen, that, if a man watch too closely what goes on in doors, the idea will be suggested to him, that while he prides himself, very likely, on working well at one trade, a woman may work well at half a dozen, and not pride herself at all.

Mr. Fennel is a carpenter. Mr. Melendy is a shoemaker. Each is master of one trade, and only one, and works at that all day. Mr. Fennel doesn't stop to mend his shoes. Mr. Melendy doesn't leave off pegging to make a new front-door.

Mrs. Fennel is mistress of many trades. Mrs. Fennel is cook, tailoress, dressmaker, milliner, dyer, housemaid, doctor, and boy's capmaker; also, at times, schoolmaster, lawyer, and minister. For she hears the children's lessons; she adjusts their quarrels with the judgment of a judge; and she gives them sermons on morals which contain the gist of the whole matter.

Of all these occupations, cooking, I observe, ranks the highest. That is sure of attention: the others take their chance. That is cut out of the whole cloth: the others get the odds and ends. I have observed also, in this connection, that the day in

doors resolves itself into three grand crises, called the three meals. It is surprising, it is really wonderful, the way these are brought about with every thing else going on beside. Indeed, this prying into domestic affairs has made me surprised twice. First, at the amount of physical labor a woman has to perform; second, that she can carry so many things on her mind at one time, or rather that her mind can act in so many directions at one time, and so quickly. This in-doors work seems commonplace enough; to the fastidious, repugnant even. The same may be said of a mud-puddle. But dip up a dipperful of the mud, examine it closely, and you will find it teeming with life. So, examine an hourful of household work, and you will find it all alive with plans, contrivances, forethoughts, afterthoughts, happy thoughts, and countless trifling experiences, minute, it may be, but full of animation. The puddle is often set in commotion by a passing breeze, or by a stone dropping in. Well, household work, too, has its breezes of hurry and flurry, besides its regular trade-winds, which blow morning, noon, and night. And, if company unexpected isn't like the stone dropping in, then what is it like?

This is written, as the scientific people say, from

observations taken on the spot. One day I spent an hour in watching Mrs. Fennel at her work, and an hour in watching Mr. Fennel at his. Being in a humorous as well as a scientific frame of mind, I played they were my specimens, and that the matter under consideration really did belong to some branch of science, unknown, of course, to a country schoolmaster. I copy from my note-book :—

“ Time, forenoon ; place, kitchen.

“ Fly, my pencil, fly, like Mrs. Fennel’s feet ! Dinner is getting. It seems now as if every moment were a crisis. What’s that she is dropping into hot water ? Oh ! turnip, sliced and peeled. Meat, pudding, potatoes, squash, beans, &c., require, I see, different lengths of time in the cooking. But they must be on the table at twelve o’clock, done just right ; some of them mashed, and all of them hot. Think of the calculation necessary to bring this about ! Meanwhile, in the intervals of lifting the pot-lid, Gussy’s new suit is being “ cut out of old.” And here, again, calculation — that is, *mind* — is required in cutting the cloth to advantage.

“ Now Mrs. Fennel drops down to take a long breath. ‘ How much sugar must be put into this gooseberry pie ? ’ Martha asks. ‘ Rising one cupful ’ Now a little girl comes of an errand : ‘ Mother wants

you to write down how to make corn-starch gruel. Bobby's sick.' Mrs. Fennel writes directions. Now she is ironing. Why not wait till after dinner? Oh, to be sure! 'We must iron while we have a fire.' Now Gussy rushes in pell-mell to ask if when he carries Emma's gooseberries for her because she



*asked him to, and then stubs his toe, and spills 'em, he* ought to pick 'em up? Now comes Emma, to say that Gussy tried to stub his toe, because she picked more gooseberries than *he* did when *he* went. Mrs. Fennel adjusts the quarrel; preaches a sermon on envy, truth, and brotherly love; informs Gussy what Malaga is famous for; tries on his jacket (telling a story to make him stand still); catches up a rent in Emma's dress; trades with a tin-peddler (*mind*

again) ; and through all this keeps her eye on the cook-stove ; drops things into hot water ; forks things out of hot water ; contrives places for saucepans, spiders ; runs round with a long-handled spoon, now with a knife, stirring, mashing, seasoning, tasting, till at last the moment arrives, and the men-folks arrive, and the grand crisis of the day is at its climax. But oh the flurry and excitement of the last fifteen minutes ! the watching the clock, the looking in at the oven, the disappointment when things that should have risen have fallen ! As if this did not happen in life always ! ”

The second hour gave less striking results. I found Mr. Fennel planing and grooving boards. His movements were distinguished by an entire calmness. There was no hurry, no excitement, to keep his mind on the snap every moment ; no grand climax for which boards, laths, shingles, nails, and clapboards must be got ready, let come what would. “ Too monotonous,” the notes read, “ to be of any special interest.” Had he dropped his plane for a trowel, the trowel for a paint-brush, paint-brush for a whitewash-brush, whitewash-brush for a hod of bricks, or been called upon to slack lime, mix paint, or to give directions for building a hen-house, the proceedings in the work-shop would no doubt have been as en-

tertaining as those in the kitchen. But, as far as hinderances were concerned, Mr. Fennel might have shoved that plane till doomsday, and with a temper smooth and even as his own boards.

Since that time I have observed carefully other men and other women at their work ; and thus far my observations show that the average mother of a family requires and uses, in the performance of her daily duties, higher qualities of mind than does the average father of a family in the performance of his. Indeed, the more closely I observe, the more amazed am I at the skill, tact, energy, insight, foresight, judgment, ability, genius, I may almost say, so often displayed by the former.

Well, and what then? Why, then the question arises, “ Is woman, in the present condition of things, making the best use of all these high qualities ? ” This question is not suggested by the fact of her giving herself up so entirely to her family. Oh, no ! most emphatically no. Children must have their mother. She belongs to them. The best a woman has, the best an arch-angel has, is none too good for the children. No : the question is suggested, partly by the “ observations ” I have been making, and partly by the recollection of Mrs. Melenyd’s remark, that the “ three meals take

about all day." I am glad the sewing-circle meets here this week; for, by attending to the conversation, I may learn upon what subjects the minds of at least some fifteen or twenty women chiefly dwell.

Another question, and a startling one too, is this "If woman ever has a chance properly to develop these remarkable qualities of mind, what is going to become of the mental superiority of the dominant sex?"

No more, no more! My brain is confused, my soul disquieted within me. Whoever would be tranquil, let him not investigate.

## IV.

## THE SEWING-CIRCLE.—HOW IT WAS STARTED.

THE sewing-circle is in session in the adjoining room. It counts thirty-two members in all, — a goodly number for a population of only twenty-five or thirty families. The gathering to-day is not large; a thunder-storm, and a circus at Elmbridge, conspiring to keep many away.

Mrs. Fennel has been telling me about this sewing-circle, and what it is trying, or rather is determined, to do. The people of Tweenit village never had a meeting-house, but have held religious services in the schoolhouse. Now the women want to change all this. They want to build a chapel; and for that purpose they mean to raise eight hundred dollars.

“Eight hundred dollars!” I exclaimed when Mrs. Fennel named the sum. “Why, there’s hardly as much money in the place!”

“That’s just what the men told us,” she answered; “but we have faith.”

"I should think so," said I, "and works too."

The men, it seems, threw cold water at the very beginning.

"Where's all that money coming from?" "Lumber high!" "Labor high!" "Saddle the place with debt!" "All nonsense! The old schoolhouse is good enough!"

And the idea might have been quenched entirely, but for the burning zeal of two unmarried women,— "Nanny Joe" and "Nanny Moses," the daughters respectively of Mr. Joseph Payne and Mr. Moses Payne. They believed in a chapel. They preached this belief; and many women were converted. The first convert was Miss Janet (Mr. William Melendy's wife, called "Miss Janet," to distinguish her from four other Mrs. Melendys). A meeting was called at her house. Before its close, the wildest enthusiasm prevailed. The men's objections first were shown up to be scarecrows, then pelted down with ridicule. A sewing-circle was formed, which met once a week to sew "slop-work," and knit toes of stockings,—heels, too, I think. Oh, yes! "heeled and toed :" that's the very expression. In other respects, the stockings were woven. The circle meant business. Some members met early in the morning, and worked all day. Ellinor Payne,

who is employed in a tailor's shop at Piper's Mills, gave fifteen dollars of her own earnings. The enthusiasm increased. Did any waver in the faith, influenced by doubting men, Nanny Joe and Nauny Moses were ready to encourage and sustain. Nanny Joe and Nanny Moses were eloquent to persuade, ingenious to devise, skilful to contrive, and untiring in their labors. They fired the ambition of every woman in the place. They took that chapel (the chapel that was to be), and resolved it into its constituent parts,—its doors, windows, timbers, boards, nails even, and induced different individuals to be responsible for, say, a bundle of shingles, a window, a door, a stick of timber. Young and old caught the fever. Little girls vied with each other in earning panes of glass. Blooming maidens took upon their shoulders clapboards, laths, and kegs of nails. Matrons bore bravely their respective burdens of beams, rafters, and flooring; and one cheerful old grandame, a steadfast knitter, smiled under the weight of the desk.

The little girls earned their money by running of errands, and picking huckleberries, and making patchwork cradle-quilts to sell. The older ones also picked huckleberries. When the season was at its height, the circle met in the pastures, and

picked its pecks and its bushels. The berries were sent to Piper's Mills to be sold. If there were no other way of sending them, Nanny Joe and Nanny Moses would take Mr. David's old red horse and go themselves. Mr. David Melendy committed himself at the very beginning, by a promise, which, though made in jest, was claimed in terrible earnest, as the old man found to his cost.

"I'll agree to find horse and cart to cart all the work they'll get," said Mr. David sarcastically, when he first heard of the sewing-circle. His narrow vision took in Tweenit village only, where each family generally does its own needlework. But there were eyes of a wider range,—far-seeing eyes, which saw the "store" at Piper's Mills, whereat were left weekly, by an agent from the city, huge bundles of slop-work and stocking-work for the sewers and knitters of that neighborhood. The sewing-circle obtained one of these bundles, and did its work so well that the agent not only promised it more bundles, but heaped bundles upon it; so that Nanny Joe had frequent opportunities of going to Mr. David, and saying, with a mischievous twinkle of her laughing black eyes, "More work to cart, Mr. Melendy!"

"Wal, wal, Nancy," that victim of his own jest

would reply, "I'll stan' by my word. But you must help me ketch him."

This is not so very difficult a task ; for that fat old horse of his would as soon be caught as not to be. Whether he goes or stands still is all one to him, and nearly so to his driver. For calmness, for meekness, for sublime indifference, Mr. David's



animal would take the medal. As may be imagined, he is a very *even* horse to drive ; never allows himself to be disturbed by outside influences, but jogs heavily on, with a flop and a plunge, unmoved by word or blow.

"Speak of the ancient Nicholas," says the proverb, "and you will see his horns." And, in confirmation of it, behold this identical animal

now approaching the house, shaking all over at every flop, as if he were a horse of jelly. Nanny Joe and Nanny Moses have just driven from Piper's Mills with some bundles of work. Nanny Moses holds up a letter. Her fair, round face reminds me of Mrs. Fennel's favorite expression, "Smiling as a basket of chips." Thirty-seven or thirty-eight they say is her age. They also say that she holds her own pretty well, which is saying a good deal; for "her own" must weigh a hundred and fifty, at the least. Anybody might know those two would be intimate, they are so unlike. Nanny Joe is tall, slender; has coal-black hair, coal-black eyes, a sallow complexion, and a chin unnecessarily long. She is pleasing and sprightly; her friend, pleasing and quiet.

Now joyful shouts arise. There is money in the letter. David Melandy, junior, has sent twenty dollars. These women leave no stone unturned. A few months ago, one of them, while on a visit to the city, called upon all Tweenit-born individuals there residing, and by appealing to their pride, their generosity, or their piety, as suited each case, obtained various sums to help the cause along. Tweenites dwelling afar, amid Sitka's snows or California's golden sands, were appealed to through

the United-States mail ; and the letter just received is in answer to one of those appeals. It comes from Sitka ; and Nanny Joe says the money is the profits arising from a rise in white bears. I was present the other day at the reading of a letter addressed to one Mr. Ezra Fennel, which must stir the depths of Mr. Ezra Fennel's heart, if not of his pocket-book. Men's money, after all ? Well, so is the gold in a gold-mine the gold-mine's gold. There is a great deal in knowing how to work a mine, and a great deal in knowing how to work a pocket-book.

Now that the Sitka excitement is over, and the circle is subsiding into its natural state, I will take a few notes of the conversation. They may throw some light on the subject of my present inquiries. Woman, I perceive, displays mind enough, both at home and abroad ; and now I want to find out upon what kind of subjects her mind ordinarily dwells.

## V.

## NOTES TAKEN AT THE SEWING-CIRCLE.

NOT as a listener, but as an investigator, investigating the very important subject of domestic affairs. Why not call it a scientific subject? Why not found a small science of my own here in this out-of-the-way place? The wise ones, the ones that own the big sciences, won't know any thing about it; and, if they do, they won't try to get mine away from me, having so many heavenly bodies, motive-powers, the forces of Nature, and, in fact, all created things, to attend to.

My science has the forces of Nature in it too (human nature), and a motive-power. Their motive powers act on machinery; mine acts on human beings. It is the power by which woman "carries on the family;" and I have seen for myself that there is a "power of it" used in some families; also that it can be *turned on*, as the factory people say, in other directions; in that of chapel-building, for

instance. Give it a name ; call it mind-power ; for it is a combination of some of the highest mental qualities. Not fully developed, though ; oh, no ! scarcely begun to be developed yet.

It being settled, then, that woman does possess this motive-power which belongs to *my* science, and which I have named mind-power, the question next arises, Is she doing all she can with it? Is none of it running to waste? What ideas, apart from household affairs, take up her mind mostly? It was to obtain light on this last question, that I resolved to pay attention to the talk at the sewing-circle. I wished to take the level, the mental level, of its members. Their conversation, by revealing what subjects chiefly occupy woman's thoughts, I believed, would give me some idea of how much she is accomplishing with this mind-power of hers.

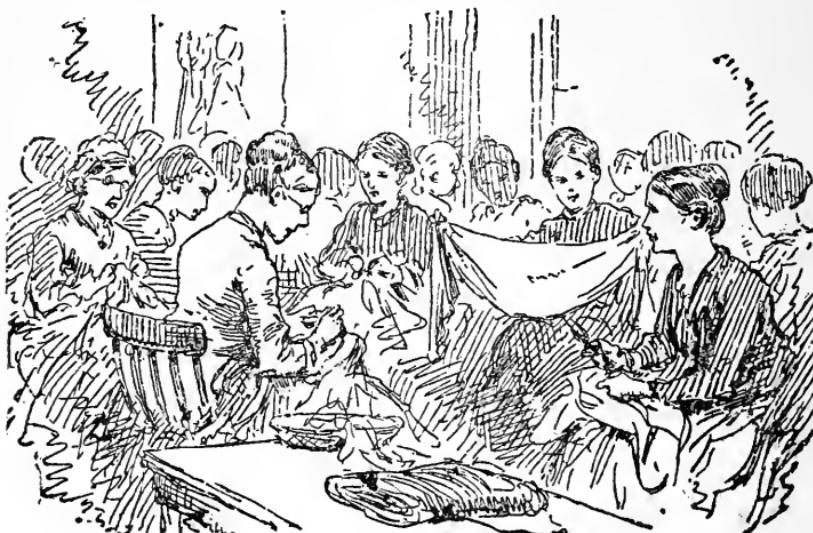
True, Tweenit is only one village ; but it is, probably, much like other villages, and its sewing-circle like other sewing-circles.

#### NOTES OF CONVERSATION.

AUNT JINNY UNDER THE HILL.—Aunt Jinny Piper. Destitute old woman. Much given to rheumatism. Mainly dependent on charity. Might make things go further. No calculation. Slack. Cloth

given her not cut to advantage. Mouldy bread in her cupboard. Wore an apron forenoons good enough to wear afternoons. Used white pocket handkerchiefs : why not a square piece of old calico ? Grandchild visits her too often. *They say* she makes her rheumatism.

AUNT JINNY DOWN AT THE CRICK. — Another Aunt



Jinny Piper. Unmarried. Well off. Chests full of sheets and pillow-cases. Stingy. Got enough of every thing. Might clothe Aunt Jinny under the hill just as well as not. Ought to give land to build chapel on. Great for beating down prices. Paid man that spaded up her garden in pumpkins. Pumpkins overran two cents : told man he must bring back the skins and insides for her pig, to make it all square.

PLANNING.—“Forecasting” your work. Lying awake nights to plan how next day’s baking shall be worked in between the ironing or house-cleaning. Babies make it so you can’t carry out your plans. Best not to take much notice of young children, so they’ll bear “turning off.”

MIS SUSAN.—Mis Susan, wife of Mr. Henry Melendy. Lives in Pickerel Brook neighborhood. Has traded shawls with a peddler, and got a green one. Don’t see what Mis Susan wants of a green shawl. Shouldn’t think ’twould be becoming to her. Her shawl was a beautiful shawl. Hadn’t had it a great while. Guess she’ll be sorry. Don’t believe this one’s all wool.

SPRING O’ THE YEAR.—Always want something sour in the spring o’ the year. Man that brings along “Archangel Bitters” to sell. Some say your gall runs into your liver; more likely your liver runs into your gall. How does anybody know? Dread spring o’ the year. Brings so much work! Nothing to make pies of. Feel lost without pies. Vinegar mince-pies better’n no mince-pies. Soak your cracker in your vinegar. Chop your raisins. Makes beautiful pies, if you take pains. What *my* husband likes, and what *my* husband likes. Children ditto. My Ella B. won’t touch molasses

gingerbread. My Tommy'll eat his weight in it. My Abner could sit up all night to eat sausage-meat. Sight o' work to make sausage-meat. Sight o' work to cook calf's head. Wants "good sweet pork" with it. Calves' brains make beautiful sauce. (Various recipes omitted.)

HENRY T. — Henry T. Rogers. Young man. Began business in the city, and failed. Henry T. always held his head up high. Would have to come down. High-strung all that family were. *They say* he has bad habits. *They say* extravagance did it. *They say* (remainder in whispers).

FRED AND MARION. — A pair of lovers. *They say* they've broken off. *They say* she's written him a letter. *They say* he goes with another girl. Dreadful thing to Marion. Probably wear her into a consumption. *They say* she cries all night. 'Course she'll send back his presents. Gold ring, worth how much? Some of his presents worn out, Wonder how his father's property'll be divided.

FENNEL PAYNE AND ADELINE. — Fennel Payne, a young married man, distantly related to the Fennels and the Paynes. Has wife (Adeline) and small child. Adeline stuck up. Always was stuck up. Has strange notions. Both of 'em have strange notions. Spent five dollars for a picture. No great

things of a picture. Adeline sits down to read in the daytime. They go to take walks together. Go up on the hill and sit down sometimes. Funny actions for married folks.

HOW ARE YOU GOING TO HAVE YOUR DRESS MADE?—(Notes omitted. Reason, unfamiliarity with terms used.)

The above is a small part of what was taken down in my note-book.

Summary of observations made up to date in Tweenit Village:—

First, that woman works hard physically, works very hard, and with not much respite.

Second, that in “carrying on the family” (this is a very common phrase here),—in “carrying on the family,” and in various ways, she displays mental qualities of a high order.

Third, that in working so hard, or in as far as she works so hard, merely to gratify the palate, she is spending herself physically for an unworthy end.

Fourth, that her mind-power is running to waste in the same direction; also in other directions, as is shown by the not very high tone of her conversation.

## VI.

## PEBBLES, OR DIAMONDS?

I “DREAMED a dream that was not all a dream,” — dreamed of seeing a vast company of women, a multitude whom no man could number, all earnestly engaged in picking up — pebbles. Gems of priceless value lay scattered everywhere around ; but these were passed by unnoticed. “ Foolish creatures ! Why don’t they leave the pebbles, and take the diamonds ? ” I cried.

There was a reason for my dreaming such a dream. I went to Piper’s Mills the other day, to carry a bundle of “ circle-work ” for Nanny Joe. I took Mr. David’s horse, and, while there, called on an acquaintance of mine,— Mrs. Royal. A couple of her neighbors had dropped in to tea that afternoon ; and I was cordially invited to stay.

“ If you don’t mind being the only gentleman,” said Mrs. Royal. I replied most gallantly that it would give me the greatest pleasure to be placed in

so enviable a minority ; all the while saying to myself most "scientifically," *Three new specimens. Observe mental habits. Compare with those of sewing-circle members. More light on domestic science.* (*My science has a name now.*)

I knew something of Mrs. Royal and her friends ; and that they differed in many respects from the majority of women. When, therefore, the tea-table talk began, I prepared to listen with interest, believing that my new specimens, though of the same class as my Tweenit friends,—that is, neither poorer nor richer,—would prove to be a different species.

The talk ran first on

TEA-ROSES.—So fragrant ! so beautiful ! Beautiful ? Why, the beauty of even one half-opened bud was too much to take in. Article in the newspapers speaking of a beauty which makes "sense ache." Damask-roses going out of fashion. Wild roses in June reddening the wayside banks. Fragrance of the sweet-brier, of the trailing arbutus. Flowers of spring, and their haunts. Pleasure of giving and of receiving flowers.

ANECDOTES OF THE FLOWER-MISSIONS IN THE CITIES.—Beautiful "mission," that of sending flow-

ers to the sick-beds of the poor. What is being done in various places for the poor, the ignorant, the degraded, and the friendless. It is beginning to be understood that we are all of one family. Will the time ever come when this family feeling shall unite the nations?

**THE WAR-SPIRIT.** — How shall it be done away? Influence of battle-pictures and battle-stories on the young. Some of the principal studies in schools and colleges are histories of battles. Pictures of military commanders in almost every house. How does all this affect the coming of the time when swords shall be beaten into ploughshares?

**IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING GOOD INFLUENCES TO BEAR ON CHILDREN.** — Obedience from children. How to secure it, and at the same time encourage in them a proper degree of self-reliance. Best ways of developing the good that is in children. Educating the heart as well as the head. Importance of physical health. When children, as they grow up, “go wrong,” who is responsible?

**ALLEN WENTWORTH.** — A young man who “went wrong.” Dissipated. Inherited love of drink. Is it for us who inherited no such tendency to condemn him? Mental and moral qualities handed down. Shall the “born good” despise the “born

bad"? Allen Wentworth like character in a novel recently read by one of the company. Other novels and other characters spoken of.

**BOOKS AND AUTHORS GENERALLY.** — Funny scenes recounted and laughed at. Heroes and heroines discussed. Beautiful passages quoted.

**DESCRIPTIONS OF NATURAL SCENERY.** — Woods in spring. In fall. Shadows on the grass. Waving of corn and grain. Sunsets. Sunrises.

We remained together for three or four hours, during which time I took notes, mentally, of the ideas expressed by different members of the company. I have put these notes upon paper in such a way as to show pretty nearly the course of the conversation, and how naturally one thing led to another.

During my ride home I had ample opportunity, thanks to the peculiar temperament of Mr. David's horse, of comparing this conversation with that to which I had listened at the sewing-circle. And what a difference! Why, that first one was so trivial, so aimless, with its never-ending gossip, I actually felt myself growing smaller while hearing it.

And I could but compare the two ways in which the two sets of talkers handled the same subjects. For instance, "spring o' the year" was mentioned

by the first merely as a time of house-cleaning, and a dearth of pie-material. The second talked of spring flowers and spring birds, of leaves bursting, and swamps awaking. Children were discussed by the first set, chiefly, I think, with regard to what they liked to eat, or to whether, individually, they were or were not “hard on their clothes ;” at any rate, there was no interchange of ideas concerning the right way of bringing them up. The second spoke of children as immortal beings, the training of whom called for a mother’s best endeavors. Even in talking about their neighbors there was a difference. Many members of the sewing-circle seemed rather to enjoy the downfall of Henry T., — some even to exult over it. Allen Wentworth, on the contrary, was tenderly spoken of by Mrs. Royal and her friends ; and the causes of his wrong-doing were thoughtfully considered.

Then, again, there was a difference in the kinds of enjoyment with which the two sets of people enjoyed their conversations ; that of the last being infinitely higher. “How charming !” “Now, isn’t that grand !” “What a beautiful idea !” they exclaimed, now and then, as some heart-stirring passage was repeated. The face of each listener or speaker would light up with pleasure ; and the eyes

would tell that her very soul was enjoying itself. I could but remember, then, Adeline, Fennel Payne's wife, who was blamed by some of the circle for "sitting down to read in the daytime;" as if daytime were only made for rolling out pastry, sewing dresses, and the like. And when that tea-table talk ran on flowers and birds, woods, waters, glorious sunsets, and all the wonderful "out-doors," I again remembered Fennel Payne and Adeline, and how they had been ridiculed for "taking walks," and "sitting down upon the hill."

The ridicule, I thought, and still think, should be turned the other way. They are the ones to be ridiculed, who shut themselves in behind lath and plaster, and there scrub, sew, and cook, cook, sew, and scrub, scarcely noticing the wondrous show which each season, in turn, prepares for them. Flowers may bloom, trees may wave, brooks may ripple, the whole earth blossom into beauty; but they take no heed. It really does seem like slighting the gifts which God has bestowed.

There is much to admire and to reverence in these women of Tweenit. They are, generally speaking, just as bright and just as good as my friends at Piper's Mills. The point is, that they do not, or the majority of them do not, like those friends of

mine, get the *best* out of life. Their energies are spent chiefly on physical, not mental needs. Their talk is trivial. Nature is almost a dead loss to them. While others are enjoying, through books, communion with the noblest minds, they are taken up with the petty concerns of their neighbors. While others seek for knowledge worth the knowing, they are satisfied



to learn that some "Mis Susan" or other has "swapped shawls." And what is true of Tweenit is pretty likely to be true of other places. Then there is another class, not yet considered, the butterfly class, who give their attention chiefly to plumage. Ah, there must be a vast company of women, a multitude whom no man can number, who pick up pebbles, and leave the diamonds !

How is it with the "men-folks," in this respect?

## VII.

*KINDLING-WOOD.*

“LISTENERS never hear any good of themselves.” It is really unfair, however, to rank myself in so unworthy a class. No mean listener I, but an earnest inquirer, seeking light on any and every branch of domestic science.

Votaries of the great sciences, it is said, while pursuing their studies with a view to some particular facts or truths, often stumble upon others which are quite as important. And in like manner a few days since, while continuing my observations on the mental status of the women of Tweenit village, did I stumble upon some facts in regard to the opposite sex, which are really worth attending to, and which, at the time, reminded me of the proverb about listeners ; for I had the mortification — it was one day when Mrs. Melendy and a few of the neighbors dropped in to help Mrs. Fennel quilt — of hearing man discussed in his capacity of light-wood provider.

"Men-folks" as kindling-splitters! Are husbands, sons, and brothers ready for the question? Have they clear consciences on this point? How many can fearlessly invoke the spirit of free inquiry?

"And now you're married, you must be good,  
And keep your wife in *kindling-wood*,"

runs the old rhyme. A wise injunction, but one not universally obeyed; that is, if the husbands of Tweenit are representative men in this respect. The heart-rending experiences which were related that day! — the anxieties, perplexities, calamities, agonies! all of which might have been averted by "light wood," as some of them call it.

One sufferer took a "sight o' pains" with her cake, "separated" the eggs, "braided" the sugar and butter; but — it fell. Green pine was its ruin. Miss Janet's dumplings "riz right up, light as a feather, the first of it, but came out soggy; and all for lack of a little flash under the pot." Another "had out-of-town company come unexpected one day; and, because there was no light wood on hand to start up a fire in the front-room, they had to sit right down in the kitchen, and see every thing that was going on." Mrs. Melenyd's (Mary Melenyd's) Dicky was taken ill in the night; and there was an

agonizing delay in steeping the “seeny,” on account of Mr. Melenyd’s having forgotten to “split the kindling over night.”

And so on, and so on. Men were always apt to forget the kindling, Mrs. Melenyd said, but always expected their dinner, *whatever*; and expected light victuals from green pine-wood! Light wood made heavy wood go better. Men didn’t understand how tried a woman was with worrying over her fire, and with not having things convenient.

Here the talk diverged, and ran upon things convenient that each would like to have. One wanted a slide-door cut through into the buttery, to save running all the way round with the dishes; another, an oil-carpet, to save washing floor; another, netting in every window and outside door, to save “fighting flies;” another, stationary tubs, with pipes to let the water in and out, such heavy work, lifting tubs! another would have a washer and wringer; another, water let into her sink; and still another wanted her sink-room floor raised up level with the kitchen, it made her back ache so to keep stepping up and down all the time!

And, from things convenient, they went to things pleasant, that “’twould be so nice to have!” Among these were mentioned canary-birds, a me-

lodeon, a magazine, Madame Demorest's Monthly, a set of handsome furniture, lots of pictures, a window built out for keeping plants through the winter, a bathing-room, a set of furs, a whole barrel of lemons and oranges, a lavender-colored poplin dress; and one of the company would like to take a little journey.

I observed that these conveniences and pleasures were spoken of in a jesting, almost sarcastic tone, as if the likelihood of obtaining them were about equal to that of obtaining the crown-jewels of England. In regard to the first, the conveniences, "My husband can't afford it," was a phrase used so often, as to set me to thinking, and that quite seriously. These domestic phrases all have a bearing on my present studies.

"Can't afford it!" Now, it is a question well worth considering, what are the things to be afforded.

In the first place, what is our most precious possession, the best worth having, the best worth saving? Why, life, to be sure! "All that a man hath will he give for his life." "Any thing to save life" is a remark frequently heard.

The next point that I wish to make is, that a woman who overworks sacrifices her life. I have heard women speak of being so tired they could not sleep,

but lay all night with “nerves a-trembling,” and rose in the morning unrefreshed. Now, no human being can live long in such a condition as that. Well, then, if overwork kills, whatever saves work saves life. Life is the most precious possession: therefore, money spent in saving work is money well spent; and the answer to our question is, that conveniences are the things to be afforded.

But men, that is, many men, do not consider the subject in this light. Apparently, those women were right in saying that a man “don’t understand” how “tried” a woman is with not having things convenient. Apparently, men “don’t understand” that such words as “backache,” “headache,” “nervous,” “trembling,” mean wearing out.

I recollect several cases in which a husband let himself be importuned for some “convenience,” week after week, and granted it at last with the bearing of a person doing an inestimable favor; as if he were an outside party, having no interest in the affair at all. I believe, that if Mr. Fennel should provide Mrs. Fennel with “stationary tubs, with pipes to let the water in and out,” — tubs, mind, in which to wash his own clothes, — he would consider himself entitled to her everlasting gratitude. At any rate, I see that whenever a wash-

erwoman is hired, the money to pay her comes hard, as hard as lifting the tubs does to Mrs. Fennel and Martha.

I have a friend, who, after his wife really had been injured by bringing water from a well, did at last, by reason of her importunity, put a pump in the sink. And, ever since that great job was accomplished,



whenever she asks for any thing which can possibly be done without, "that pump" serves as an excuse for refusing. Yes, and probably "that pump" will be made to throw cold water on dress, carpet, magazine, or melodeon for many a year to come.

Now, my friend was interested in "that pump" just as much as his wife, only she never had allowed

him to find it out. If, when the pailful he brought in the morning — and which he “didn’t understand” why it should not last all day — was used up, if then she had let the dinner stop cooking, why, that would have made him “understand.” But, instead of doing this, she went to the well herself, knowing that he would “expect his dinner, whatever,” to quote Mrs. Melendy.

And observation has shown me that the majority of men, both in Tweenit and out of Tweenit, expect a great deal of women “whatever.” They expect a woman will always be good-natured ; will keep the whole house in order ; will let nothing be wasted ; will bear to be found fault with ; will never find fault ; will have the children look neat ; will cook three meals a day ; will always have light bread ; will wash and iron, make and mend, entertain company, and, if possible, get along without hired help. Yet they do not, as a general thing, exert themselves overmuch to provide her with conveniences, still less with pleasures. Really, this is something like “expecting light victuals from green pine-wood” !

And, now I think of it, I wonder if there be not in the lives of some women too much “green-pine ;” if some husbands don’t “forget the kin-

dling" all the way through. Mrs. Melendy said that "light wood" would make the heavy wood go better. I wonder if a little "light wood" now and then, in the shape of a pleasure-trip, or of books, music, conveniences, sets of furs, and pretty things in the house, or even of an appreciative or commendatory word, would not make woman's heavy burden of work go better.

## VIII.

### MR. MCKIMBER RISES TO EXPLAIN.

YES, there is too much “green pine” in the lives of some women; but then, on the other hand, there is equally too much “light wood” in the lives of others. Mrs. Fennel remarked, in the course of the kindling conversation, that sometimes her wood-pile would be all “logs and sog,” and next thing ’twould be all “light stuff,” and that what you want is to have both together. You want good solid wood to keep the fire agoing; and you want dry pine to make a flash. I gathered from the talk, however, that this ideal wood-pile is seldom found in Tweenit. “If they could all be shaken up together,” said Mrs. Melendy, meaning wood-piles, “they would all come out about right.” And I suppose it is somewhat so with the lives of women. Some are mostly “green pine;” and some are mostly “light stuff:” if they all could be shaken up together, they all would come out about right.

No concern of mine? Why do I interest myself so much in woman's life and woman's work? Attend to my own affairs? Why, that is just what I am doing. I have discovered from my late course of reading that woman is my "affair." Am I not, as one of the dominant sex, placed in authority over her? Are not her interests in my keeping? Have I not, with others like me, to make the laws which govern her? and to see that she obeys them? and to punish her, if she does not? and to regulate the taxes on her property? and to say what studies she may pursue, and what profession, if any, she may adopt?

And, more than all this, I have, to some degree, the care of her conscience. For instance, if she be doubtful as to the wrongfulness of her rising to speak in prayer-meeting, or in the pulpit, or on the platform, it is my province to decide for her. And, as she is intellectually unable to interpret what the Scriptures have to say on this point, it is my clearer head, as one of the clearer heads of the dominant sex, which must bring out the meaning, and place it where she can see it. And if, after being thus morally and intellectually enlightened, the Spirit move her so strongly, that she must rise and speak, then I, with others in authority, must compel her to silence. Woman? *She* doesn't know what is best

for herself. *She* doesn't know, in all cases, right from wrong. Fortunately, she has in man an unerring guide.

My own affairs indeed! It is the affair of all in authority, I should think, to acquaint themselves with the condition of their subjects, in order to legislate wisely, and above all justly. Some of those old Eastern rulers, I believe, used to go among their people in disguise, for this very purpose. Well, so am I a ruler in disguise, acquainting myself with the condition of those over whom I am set in authority; and my disguise is the robe of indifference.

And besides all this, besides being spiritual adviser, instructor, and ruler, I may (though the idea is amusing, and its fulfilment by no means probable), — I may, it is not impossible, be a husband also. And my wife may ask me a question. She will, if she is good; for, if there be one single plain text of Scripture, it is that which bids a woman, if she wants to know any thing, ask her husband at home. And I, for one, mean to take some notice of women, so as to find out beforehand what manner of questions a wife will be likely to ask, lest, not having my answers ready, I be brought to shame. By the way, does not educating women at all rather

"go agin that text o' Scripter," to use Mr. David's expression?

Now comes still another consideration, and a very serious one. It is certainly my business to see that woman is fitted for the training of children, because, in this republican country, women's



sons will all help to rule the land. Princes of royal households, it is well known, are cared for from their births with the utmost solicitude. Here every family is a royal household, and every boy is a prince. Every girl is not a princess; but she may become the mother of a prince.

Now, who has the charge of all these royal chil-

dren at the time when their characters are forming? Who gives the first direction to the minds of those who will in time control the affairs of our country? Woman. And it is my business as an American citizen to learn what are her qualifications for an office of such responsibility.

It was this last consideration which induced me to listen so attentively to my friends at Piper's Mills, and to my friends at the sewing-circle, when the talk ran upon children; for it bore directly on a theory of mine. I suppose every scientist has a theory connected with his science. My theory connected with my science is this: that a mother's chief duty is the taking care of her children. I believe that she should prepare herself solemnly for this duty, and that she should have every possible facility for its performance.

How came I by this theory? I came by it through the newspapers. I never took up one that did not have news to tell of dishonest clerks, corrupt officials, of drunkenness, theft, and murder. And I would say to myself, "Oh, how much badness there is in this dear country! And how do so many people become so bad?"

And one day I went, with my theory upon me, into Mrs. Fennel's kitchen, where I found the

women-folk in a state of great consternation. The cakes were all fried for tea; but the salt had been forgotten. "Sprinkle some over them," said I; "'twill strike through, won't it?" "Oh, no!" said Mrs. Fennel. "The salt must be mixed into the dough at the beginning of it."

"There," thought I, "that's the very 'figure of speech' I want! Yes, it comes just right. Let salt stand for goodness, and dough for the children. The goodness must be mixed in at the beginning of it: it is too late when the world has baked the dough up into men and women. It will be of no use then sprinkling it on outside: it won't strike through. All this illustrates my theory exactly. Yes, yes, mix it in at the beginning: that's it! And mothers must do it."

This point being settled, there arise three questions; namely, Is she qualified for this duty? Has she facilities for performing it? Does she feel that it *is* her chief duty?

## IX.

*"TURN 'EM OFF."*

IT was because I had my theory under consideration, — the theory of child-training being the chief duty of a mother, — that I was so much impressed by our neighbor's remark concerning the "three meals." "Now, how is this?" said I to myself. "If 'the three meals take about all day,' and making and mending, the evening, where is the children's time coming from?"

And, indeed, where is it coming from? I see that they get scraps of attention, when, for instance, as in Mrs. Fennel's case, a bit of a sermon is thrown at them now and then in the intervals of cooking, but not often a good square meal. I see that all things else are attended to before the children; not meaning before they are clothed and fed, but before time is taken to talk or read with them. I see that mothers and children are, in a measure, strangers to each other; that they have too little oppor-

tunity of becoming intimate. I see, that, with the mothers of Tweenit, life is one prolonged hurry. Feet and hands are hurrying to "get things done." The mind is ever on the stretch, planning how to "get things done," or fearing things will not "get done;" and things do not "get done." One day's work laps over on to the next, one week's on to the next, one month's, one year's; and so there is no pause, no let-down. Rest, quiet, leisure, are here unknown terms with the mother of a family; yet these are just what a mother of a family needs, and must have, for accomplishing what I think is her chief business; for this business of hers requires thought, study, earnest preparation. It requires the mother. Yes, it requires herself personally.

But how shall the children of Tweenit get their mothers, or the mothers their children? No doubt both would enjoy each other's nearer acquaintance. I remember hearing Mrs. Melendy talk one day to her little two or three years old Rosa.

" You 'ittle peshious!" she said. " Mother hasn't had you in her arms to-day. Mother *will* let every thing go, and hold you a *little* while, *whatever!*"

The child was delighted. Both were delighted. They hugged each other. They played peekaboo!

They took kisses from each other's lips ; and, oh, what a good time they had ! It lasted nearly five minutes. Little Rosa would fain have been held longer ; but mother had too much to do. The singular part of it was, and the sorrowful part, that Mrs. Melenyd appeared to consider her five minutes' good time as a stolen pleasure. It was enjoyed



with the feeling that she ought to be doing something else. I had the curiosity to wait and see what that something else was, and found it to be lemon-pies.

How is my theory going to work in Tweenit, if mothers have to steal time to fondle their children ?

I came across a story the other day, which contained an excellent moral, well conveyed. I carried the book in to Mrs. Melendy, and said to her, "This story is exactly the thing for your little boys. You might read it aloud some evening, and talk it over with them."

"O Mr. McKimber!" said she, "if you only knew how much I've got to do! Why, I can't sleep nights thinking of it!"

So there it is again. And how is my theory to work in Tweenit, if boys must go away from home for their amusements, because mothers cannot even steal time to give them?

And how is it to work in other places, and among other classes? I have a cousin living in Elmbridge. She keeps help. I made a little visit there recently, one object of which was to learn whether she does or does not give to her children the leisure thus obtained. She does not. She gives it to extras in the way of cooking, extras in the way of house-adornments, extras in the way of dress. By way of test, I took my book with me, and presented it with remarks like those addressed to Mrs. Melendy on a similar occasion. Her answer was almost identical with that of Mrs. Melendy: "Oh, you don't know how much I have to do!"

And I did not know. I could form no idea of the labor of flouncing that "suit." It had already, she assured me, taken one week's sitting-down time. My theory would not work at Cousin Sallie's. Well, now, thought I, just for the curiosity of the thing, let me try what are called the highest circles. There is one family in the highest circles, the Manchesters, with whom I am on visiting terms. They live in the city. They keep a cook, chambermaid, parlor-girl, nursery-maid, and usually a seamstress. As far as work is concerned, Mrs. Manchester's life is one prolonged state of leisure. Does she give this leisure to her children? She does not: she gives it to society. I thought I would try the "book" in her case, and did so, scarcely able to conceal a smile, as I thought how little she imagined that an experiment was being made upon her for the benefit of domestic science. I said a few words, as on the two former occasions, perhaps enlarging rather more on the desirableness of mothers giving their children more of themselves. But now came in society.

"My dear Mr. McKimber, society demands *so* much! Why, I scarcely have an hour to call my own!"

And I saw that it was so,—saw that what with

shopping, dressing, dinner-parties, evening-parties, callers, and calling, the “chief duty” stood a small chance.

Among all classes, then,—among the wealthy, the comfortably off, and the uncomfortably off,—children are wronged. They are petted, pampered, furbelowed, amused, but still wronged: they are defrauded of their mothers. This is a broad statement; and, of course, there are exceptions. I know myself some thoughtful, careful, prayerful mothers, who understand their mission, and try to fulfil it. But, as a rule, the mission is not recognized. As a rule, children are shoved aside. And this is done in many cases deliberately. Said one of the sewing-circle members, “It won’t do to notice your children too much: if you do, you can’t turn ‘em off.”

Yes, “Turn ‘em off,” is the cry. And turned off they are,—some for “society,” some for “flounces,” some for “lemon-pies.”

How, then, and where, then, is my theory to work? for mothers, exceptions excepted, do not even feel that boy-and-girl-training is their first duty. And, allowing they could be convinced of this, then comes the question of time. How shall they find time to attend to it? which is rather an odd question, as it

might be supposed that one's first duty would have the first claim. Ah, well! it is almost a hopeless case. The next generation will not be a good generation, because it will not be started rightly; and it will not be started rightly, because mothers are not attending to their business; and mothers are not attending to their business, because they "have no time," and because they are not aware that it is their business.

Why do not philanthropists organize a society for the enlightenment of mothers? That is what the country needs. And when such a society shall have been organized, and have accomplished its purpose, another must be started, the object of which shall be to furnish mothers with time: not by putting more hours into the day, or more days into the week, but by an easy process which I have in my mind, and which I am willing to divulge. Its name begins with S. I will note down here that the name begins with S.

There is a class of mothers not mentioned in these remarks, who make themselves slaves to their children by trying to gratify all their whims and wishes. This class need enlightenment as much as any other, for the kind of attention which children shall receive is a consideration of the utmost importance.

## X.

## A LOOK AHEAD.

WHEN the Society for the Enlightenment of Mothers shall have accomplished its work, and, as a consequence, it has become a recognized idea in the community that woman's special duty is to rightly train her children, then it will be in order to organize that other society, the object of which shall be to provide mothers with time for attending to that special duty. And perhaps some of my remote descendants may be called upon to draft resolutions for said society, and may be glad to find, among the musty papers of their great, great, great, many-times-great grandfather, a hint for a beginning, something like this, for instance : —

*“Whereas, Mothers of families are burdened with many cares, and whereas their crying want is want of time : therefore,*

*“Resolved, That, in our view, the necessities of the age demand the organization of a society, the object of which shall be the diffusion of time among mothers.*

"*Resolved, secondly,* That this society boldly takes its stand on the platform of Simplification.

"*Resolved, thirdly,* That, to effectually disseminate its views, this society requires, and shall have, an *organ*.

"*Resolved, fourthly,* That said organ shall be called 'The Columbian Simplifier and Time-Provider ;' and that writers shall be pecuniarily encouraged to illustrate in its columns our grand idea of Simplification in its bearing on household duties and on dress."

There, I leave my great, great, great, many-times-great grandchildren these hints, with my blessing, and would leave, also, an article for "*The Simplifier*," only for the difficulty of putting myself in a frame of mind corresponding with so remotely future a state of things,—a state of things, that is, when the controlling purposes of woman's life shall have changed so entirely.

I have a mind to try to do this, and write my article, and have it read at the sewing-circle; but then it would be premature. These mothers do not yet recognize their mission; neither do they yet place mental culture among the must haves. When they do, they will work for far other than their present aims; not but that many of these are commendable, but that they stand in the way of better things.

Take ironing, for instance. This forenoon I

heard Mrs. Fennel say to Martha, “Don’t slight the towels. I take just as much pains with a coarse brown towel as I do with any thing.” Mrs. Fennel prides herself on having the clothes “look well on the horse,”\* the tinware bright, stove polished, tables scoured, towel-fringes combed out nicely, and a pantry stored with nice things to tempt the appetite. Now, the question is not, are these ends worth attaining, but are they the principal ones worth attaining?

I am aware that any insinuation of this kind read at the sewing-circle would bring a storm about my head at once. “What! slight the ironing?” “What! not scour the tin?” “What! not keep the stove bright?” Well, they would certainly have right on their side; and I should have, more certainly, right on my side. My side being, that, through all the toil and striving, something higher shall be kept in view, and that this something higher shall not be forever shoved aside for those other things lower.

I suppose the Society for the Enlightenment of Mothers will put the case somewhat in this way,—

“As woman has mind, it may be inferred that to

\* Clothes-horse, a local term for clothes-frame.

cultivate her mind should be one special object of woman's life. That is one statement. Then, to add another, nothing in the world can be more precious than a little child. It is no light responsibility, that of giving the first direction to an immortal soul. Woman, in assuming a duty so sacred, should feel that its claims rank above all others ; that it demands of her her very best.

"A mother, then, should aim at two special duties ; namely, to cultivate her mind, and to rightly train her children. Though these two are stated separately, the last really includes the first, since, to rightly train her children, a mother needs to have every mental faculty under cultivation. This implies study, reflection, deliberation ; and these imply time. 'We have no time,' say these mothers,—'no time for books, no time to think, no time to spend with our children.' Which is not true, because they have all the time there is, but feel bound to use it for other purposes."

Now, here is where the Society for the Diffusion of Time among Mothers shall take up the work, and show how, by the application of its grand principle of Simplification to cooking and to dress, the inferior duties can be made to deliver up their "lion's share" of time. Statistical writers in "The

Columbian Simplifier" shall state the exact number of rolling-pin strokes required by an average family in a year, and the amount of time said strokes will consume, for the purpose of calculating how many hours and minutes are thus stolen from the two special objects. The same statistical writer, for a similar purpose, shall give, in figures, the stitches and minutes required to flounce an average family for a year. Comic writers will hold up to ridicule, in "The Simplifier," elaborate passages from the cook-book, thus handing them down to posterity, by whom they will be considered as relics of a barbarous age. Among these passages will no doubt be this one concerning

#### MINCE-PIES.

"Ten pounds of meat, three pounds of suet, one of currants, three of sugar, five of apple, four of raisins, one of citron, a pint of sirup of preserved fruit, a quart of wine, salt, cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, the juice and pulp of a lemon, the rind chopped fine."

Among the illustrations of "The Simplifier" may be, perhaps, one of a woman at a sewing-machine, half-buried in as yet unruffled ruffling; musical instruments at the right of her, an easel

with its belongings at the left of her, book-shelves well filled in front of her. If the artist be imaginative, he may depict, hovering over their several emblems, dim, shadowy forms to represent, respectively, the genius of music, of painting, of literature, each vainly, and sorrowfully because vainly, beckoning the ruffler away. Or, instead of a woman ruffling, it may be a woman, chopper in hand, con-



cocting the above-quoted horror of the cook-book, surrounded, of course, by the various ingredients, each properly labelled. If the artist be sensational, as well as imaginative, he may introduce here, instead of the dim and shadowy figures just now mentioned, the grim and shadowy figure of Death

as saying with an exultant laugh, “ Go on, madam, go on. You are working in my interests ! ”

Then will come the essayist. Imagine him thus,—

“ Some may ask, Mr. Editor, is it not desirable to live neatly, and to cook palatable food? Yes. But is it for this alone that woman has intellect, talent, genius, aspirations? Suppose, now, that one of these women live forty working-years. At the end of that time she can look back, and say, ‘ I have polished my stove twelve thousand times ; have scoured my knives thirty-six thousand times ; have never left one wrinkle in one coarse towel ; have swept the house from garret to cellar two thousand and eighty times ; and I have made unnumbered thousands of cakes, pies, and hot biscuits.’ Now, without saying any thing against neatness, or against eating, can that woman, in accomplishing these ends only, be said to have fulfilled the essential purposes of life?

“ The case is something like this. A person is sent on an important mission, and, being asked if he has performed his mission, replies, ‘ Why, no! I had no time. It took all the time to look out for provisions, brush the dust off my clothes, and polish my boots. These duties have been faithfully attended to, I am proud to say.’

"Or suppose a sea-captain should devote his energies mainly to keeping the ship in order and his storeroom supplied, but never steer for any port. ‘‘ Cleanliness and good living’’ is my motto,’ he would say, pointing exultingly to his well-scrubbed decks and to his well-filled storeroom. ‘Yes; but it is necessary to get somewhere,’ might properly be answered.

“ Let woman, then, while insisting on neatness, remember her mission. Let her, sailing on life’s seas, keep the ship in order and wholesomely provisioned, but at the same time steer for some port.”

The essayist will, of course, bring in those who forget their mission while picking flowers, chasing butterflies, and blowing bubbles, and will in various ways show that by simplifying cooking, and simplifying dress, time may be diffused among mothers.

**XI.****FENNEL PAYNE AND ADELINE.**

TWEENIT is usually in a state of ferment from one cause or another. Last week it was a quarrel between two neighbors ; the week before it was Aunt Jinny's (Aunt Jinny under the hill) undertaking to have company ; this week, it is silver-plated knives. Fennel Payne has bought for Adeline silver-plated knives. "It does beat all!" exclaims Mrs. Laura, who is now discussing the matter with Mrs. Fennel in an adjoining room. My prophetic eye sees a day in the far-off future, when, even in country villages, women's thoughts will be occupied by subjects of more importance. Meanwhile, Nature abhorring a vacuum, gossip flows in, as one may say, like a sea, filling every little creek and inlet between the solid high lands of housework and needlework.

It is amazing, the relish with which a choice bit of this standard entertainment is enjoyed. Mrs.

Laura comes over on some errand (she is a stoutly-built woman with a determined cast of countenance), and sits down by Mrs. Fennel. The talk begins: it grows interesting. They lean toward each other: there is animation in their faces; a light in their eyes, feeling in every tone. The announcement of a national calamity could hardly be received with greater emotion than is this wonderful news of to-day. “Silver-plated knives? What do you mean?”

It was Fennel Payne and Adeline who were criticised by the sewing-circle for their way of spending time and money. Indeed, Tweenit in general disapproves of this couple: it calls them “stuck up.” I know this cannot be true of Adeline, because she is an intimate friend of my friend Mrs. Royal of Piper’s Mills, and therefore must have common-sense, and therefore cannot be “stuck up.” And, as for her husband, I like the looks of him much, and mean to accept his kind invitation to “come over.” These two words seem to suffice for all ordinary complimenting in Tweenit, especially at the breaking-up of a gathering, when it fairly rains “come overs.” But hark! List! What is Mrs. Laura saying? “Every day!” “They don’t keep them for company, but use them every day!”

This is the last straw which breaks the back of forbearance. Purchasing the articles at all was bad enough ; but using them “every day” is atrocious. These two, Fennel Payne and Adeline, are rare specimens, which must be examined. The interests of my science demand it. I shall go “over.”

#### TWO WEEKS LATER.

Well, I have been over several times ; and I entirely approve of Fennel Payne and Adeline. They are a couple in advance of their times,—a couple worthy to live in the days of “The Columbian Simplifier and Time-Provider.” They believe in books, in beauty, in social intercourse, and in out-doors.

I found my friend Mrs. Royal staying there the last time I called. She is quite enthusiastic about Mr. Fennel Payne, and, finding that I sympathize in her enthusiasm, has kindly lent me these extracts, copied from letters which a young friend of hers received from Adeline’s sister, one Miss Vining. They eulogize Fennel Payne, and, at the same time, solve the great knife mystery.

#### EXTRACTS.

. . . “Pretty scenery, river, meadow, woods beyond. They live up stairs, have one cooking-room, one sitting-room, two sleeping-rooms, with

garret privileges, and the right to wash in the sink-room, down below, the second pleasant day after Sunday. Adeline does her own work, and takes care of little Adeline and Buddy, as they call baby. He is—but, as the girl in the book says, there never will be a word invented adequate to describe your sister's baby. No, there never will. And such a husband as Adeline has got! Oh, I tell you there are not many Fennel Paynes in this world! Oh, they two do take such comfort! Why, the very atmosphere of the house is full of comfort, and you have to breathe it in.

“Fennel comes home from work at evening, and settles himself down with an air of intense satisfaction, as if this were for him the only spot in all the world. Sometimes he undresses Buddy, Adeline, meanwhile, stepping about, doing up the work, going sideways so as to keep her eyes on them, and telling over all the cunning things baby and little Adeline have committed during the day. At last baby's father, after fumbling at the night-gown strings, and tying them in a single bow-knot, covers him over like a cocoon. Then lullaby, hushaby, softly and gently. Fennel's low tones are wonderfully sweet; and now and then Adeline joins in ‘with sweet accord.’ I tell you 'tis such a

perfect taking comfort, it almost brings the tears to my eyes. That baby's slumbers ought to be sweet, thus watched and tended. But it is so funny to see a man try to glide! In Fennel's tiptoe performances he seems to be putting himself universally out of joint. . . .

"Fennel is unwilling to have Adeline do any very hard work. They live well, but simply; that is,



they have the best of bread, meats, fruit, &c., but no elaborate concoctions which take time to prepare, and cost money to buy. Fennel says he thinks the right way is to save on non-essentials, and spend on essentials. Among essentials he counts books and pictures, especially books that have any bearing on

education. He says, that, as Adeline has little Adeline and Buddy to bring up, she ought to have the means of preparing herself to do it, and beautiful things to look at, and leisure to enjoy them, so as to keep herself in a pleasant frame of mind. There is nothing he will not do to make Adeline's work easy for her. I don't mean ever to marry till I find a man just like Fennel Payne. But he has no brother. Alas and alackaday! Why, he even bought silver-plated knives to save Adeline's arms and Adeline's moments. His Aunt Laura was over yesterday; and she gave him quite a lecture on extravagance, also threw out something about the mother of a family sitting down to read in the daytime. Fennel declared that he could buy a set of knives every month with what his aunt spent in cooking the unnecessaries of life; and Adeline did a sum in tarts and doughnuts to show where her reading-time came from. Fennel said, that, if anybody ought to sit down to read in the daytime, it is the mother of a family; for she, more than anybody, needs whatever help books can give. Aunt Laura said she approved of laying by for a rainy day; and Adeline said that was just what she was doing,—laying up ideas against the day when her health might not be so good, or her family so small. ‘The question

is, Aunt Laura,' said she, 'who wastes time and money,—you, or I?' Uncle David and Aunt Laura have always worked like slaves, and do now; but every dollar saved is put into the bank or into land. There's hardly a pretty thing in their house. They work and save, work and save, denying themselves almost every enjoyment, except that of eating. They will live well. Uncle David owned to Fennel once, that he wants to have the name, when he dies, of leaving property. What a funny idea it is, when you come to think of it,—the idea of living this life, that can't be lived but once, entirely for the sake of accumulating something, which, when we have done living, can be of no use to us! I agree with Fennel and Adeline, that we ought to get out of life what is best worth having. I suppose we can carry that with us; don't you? And I shall not marry until I meet with a man—well, something like Fennel, or, at any rate, who believes as I do in these matters. Though, to be sure, I might take one that differed a little, supposing one offered, and convert him; but it would be advisable to do this last before marriage, perhaps before the engagement. . . .

"Aunt Laura has just come over again, and she and Adeline are discussing the chapel question. They are on opposite sides, of course. 'Tis as

good as a play, being in Tweenit now ; and I long to stay longer. Such exciting times ! The women, it seems, have earned money to build a chapel (there never was any meeting-house here) ; and now the men, who have all along discouraged them from doing it, they step forward, and want to form a regular parish that shall build the chapel, and run it generally ; but they are not going to allow the women to come to the parish-meetings, and speak,—the meetings that are to dispose of their own money, They say it would be wicked. Isn't this funny ? ” . . .

## XII.

### NEW INVENTION WANTED.

I HEARD Nanny Joe remark, the other day, that begging money was akin to pulling teeth; and, for her part, she wished there was a way of putting people's avaricious propensities under some influence akin to laughing-gas, that their money might be drawn without pain. I said to her in reply, that fairs answer the purpose very well, as I could testify from experience; having taken them often, and found in every instance the effect to be such, that I scarcely knew of any operation being performed, until I woke up, and found my money extracted. Nanny replied, that such machinery was too cumbersome, and that she meant some little, handy pocket-contrivance to be applied individually. Probably Mr. David was the individual in her mind at the time. The old man is pretty well to do for a farmer; yet his dollars come hard. Every one has roots to it; and the roots are clinched.

Nanny Joe and Nanny Moses have been trying to beg money enough to buy a second-hand sewing-machine for Mrs. Hannah Knowles. Mr. Knowles, a year or two ago, was killed by falling from a roof; and his widow has been struggling ever since to support the family,—yes, struggling, and among all these Christians!

It would seem no more than fair that a home bereft in such a way should be provided with even more comforts than the happier homes around; that a heart thus grief-stricken should be relieved of every possible burden,—no more than fair, and no more than Christian-like. Christianity, it is said, is better than other religions, because it teaches that we are all brothers and sisters. Now, among a family of children, the rule is, when one has any thing good, “Give dear brother or sister some.” How often have I heard this at Mrs. Melenyd’s! And another thing. Yesterday, while I was calling there, little Rosa Melenyd fell, and bruised her head. The other children were around her in a moment,—one with a doll, one with a cooky, one with a kiss, one with a flower; all trying to comfort the child. Maybe we are all brothers and sisters, as our religion teaches; but I know that we are not willing, all of us, when we have any thing good, to

'give dear brother or sister some,' or always eager to heap kindnesses on any member of the family whose heart has been bruised by sorrow.

Nanny Joe says there are very few people — that is, very few people in Tweenit (they are doubtless plenty elsewhere) — who are willing, really willing, to give away half a dollar right out and out. She asked five individuals to contribute that sum toward the sewing-machine, and they refused ; they were unmarried men, too, earning daily wages, which were spent freely in tobacco, confectionery, horse-hire, and other gratifications. Nanny says that half a dollar to be spent on one's self is a modest, insignificant little affair ; but, if to be given away, it grows so big it can hardly be got out of the pocket.

I wonder how it would be if we all gave, not from pity, or from duty, but, as one may say, impersonally. For instance, I deny myself a pleasure that would cost two dollars, and bestow one costing the same sum upon Mrs. Knowles, saying to myself, "What matters it, since a pleasure is enjoyed, whether the individual Henry McKimber enjoys it, or the individual Hannah Knowles?" This, of course, is merely a hypothetical case.

Mr. David has arrived at no such state of imper-

sonality ; neither has Mrs. Laura. I happened to be at their house when Nanny Joe called. Mr. David thought that Hannah Knowles might put out her children, and then go to the almshouse. He said he gave fifty cents three weeks before to help buy a new stove for Aunt Jinny under the hill ; also that he felt poorer than common just then, on account of having between one hundred and two hundred dollars not drawing interest, waiting for him to find a safe way of investing it ; also that his wife's breaking her arm had been a great damage to him. Nanny Joe offered to accept potatoes, and dispose of them at Piper's Mills. He said potatoes were a cash article, but finally agreed to her taking half a bushel. The tea-table was standing ; and I observed that there was no lack of good things to eat. Mr. David, no doubt, takes it for granted that he must have his comforts, whatever others may lack. Perhaps he thinks this is true Bible doctrine. Mr. David is a very doctrinal man.

Nanny Joe asked Mrs. Laura for some old pantaloons to make over for Mrs. Knowles's son. Mrs. Laura replied that her husband and the boys were very hard on their pantaloons. There are two sons at home, Elbridge and Prince, tall, slim *boys* of thirty-five or forty. Elbridge has a small face,

and a comical, one-sided twinkle of the eye, which he takes from his father.

Mrs. Laura brought out various garments, in various stages of decay, each of which was examined in turn. One pair would stand it a spell for second-best; another would do for rainy weather; another, for rough work; and so on. A pair of



gray satinets, weak-kneed, and in other respects decrepit, Elbridge remarked, with his one-sided twinkle, were "jest about a herrin'." But his mother declared them to be the very things to wear in the woods. Then he picked up a pair of brown ones, saying they were too short ever to be worn again without "splicing," and that Hannah

Knowles had better take them. His mother said she would see, first, if there were any pieces like them in the bag, "to lengthen the legs down." The bundle-bag was brought forward, roll after roll taken out, and its label read: "Prince's mixed suit o' clothes," "Father's last tail-coat," "Father's summer alpaca waistcoat," "Elbridge's sack cut out by Sally Payne's pattern," "Prince's satinet pantaloons," "Elbridge's frock-coat he had cut out by the tailor," "Elbridge's brown small-legs pantaloons" —

"That's the animal!" cried Elbridge. "But it doesn't look like 'em."

"They'll fade alike, though, some time or other," his mother remarked.

"These won't fade alike, though," he cried, taking up a pair spotted over with paint.

"I've been saving that pair o' pantaloons to braid," answered his mother; "but still" (examining them closely) "they're rather stiff; and on the whole, if Hannah Knowles can make any use of that pair of pantaloons, she may have 'em." "So, Mrs. Laura," thought I, "you give away what is of no use to you. True Bible benevolence that!" Mrs. Laura is a stanch Bible woman.

Nanny Joe declined the generous gift, and rose

to go, fearing, as she afterward told me, that the chapel question might be introduced ; which question she had then no leisure for discussing. I came out at the same time, having something to communicate on that very subject. Just as we got outside the gate, a bundle came down plump on the ground in front of us, which same, by unrolling, showed itself to be “ Elbridge’s brown small-legs pantaloons.” We turned, and, guided by a loud *hem*, looked up to the roof, and saw there the comical phiz of the owner protruding from a scuttle. He gave a nod, a finger-shake of warning, and vanished. We picked up the prize, but had a narrow escape with it, as Mrs. Laura opened the door suddenly to ask Nanny Joe if she had seen a certain piece in the paper about woman’s sphere.

The dispute as to whether women shall or shall not be allowed to become speaking and voting members of the parish shakes Tweenit to its centre. The sewing-circle members think they should have a voice in the disposal of their own money ; but the men, many of them, cannot see their way clear to letting them have a voice in the disposal of their own money, or a voice in their own chapel when it shall be built. The quarrel waxes warm. Not only the neighborhood, but families, are divided. Elbridge

Melandy thinks differently from his father. Martha Fennel and her lover are on opposite sides; and, in their case, the warmth of the argument has produced a coolness of feeling. We shall see what we shall see.

## XIII.

## A TALK IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE.

AFTER the women, by working at home and begging abroad, had obtained the requisite sum, the men came forward, and proposed meeting together to form a society, or parish, which should build the chapel, and regulate all things pertaining thereto. The women said, "Yes, a very proper thing to do: we'll come."—"Oh, no!" the men said: "we can manage it ourselves. You don't understand house-building; besides, a woman would be out of place in a parish meeting."

Nanny Joe affirmed that she and several members of the sewing-circle had consulted builders, and obtained their proposals. Mr. David answered, very well; that, when the parish should be regularly formed, she could send in a prepared statement, and the parish would act upon it. The matter created quite a stir in the neighborhood; and it soon became evident that Mr. David and others strongly objected to "women speaking in meeting." Some, however,

held views opposite to those of Mr. David, and were not backward in expressing those views. At last the direct question was raised, whether, in any future meetings to be held in the chapel, a woman should, or should not, be allowed to speak.

This question has been freely discussed, not upon set occasions, but as people met in their usual way of dropping in; what *he* said, and what *she* said, being told from house to house. Two parties have been formed; and the excitement is very great. Everybody says there was never any thing like it in Tweenit before. There probably was never so much Bible-reading. Each side searches out texts whereby to sustain its position. At first, the women were united; but, latterly, some of them, influenced by husbands, brothers, or lovers, have come out against themselves. Mrs. Laura says she has said, "Amen!" or "Glory!" occasionally in a revival-meeting at Piper's Mills, but that was before she looked into the subject; and she sees now, that, as the command forbids women to speak, one word is as wrong as twenty words. Mr. David and others say that the text is plain and direct, and therefore they cannot conscientiously worship in the building, if women speak in the meetings. The opposite party contend that the prohibition was a local affair,

applying only to the women of those days, and of that Eastern country. Mr. David replies, that, if you are going to explain away the Bible, you may as well not have any Bible.

Fennel Payne and some others propose that the men meet in the schoolhouse, and there talk the matter over, and, if possible, come to some decision. Mr. David says he is ready to do this, if Fennel Payne's party will take the Bible literally, and not add, nor take away, nor explain away.

Four days later. Last evening the men came together in the schoolhouse. Those who live near brought lamps, candles, and lanterns, which, being set in a row on the desk, did their best to bring out the low ceiling and dingy walls. Mr. David opened the discussion by saying that he saw no reason for any discussion at all, if we believed the Bible: for there was the text in plain words: "*It is not permitted that a woman should speak in the church.*"

Fennel Payne asked whether the word "church" meant a building, or the collection of people who partake of the sacrament, and are called "the church." Mr. David said it probably meant either, or both. "Then," said Fennel, "if a collection of people who do not belong to the church assemble

in a building which is not a church, a woman may speak to them?"

Mr. David began to say that the prohibition was probably intended to cover — but Fennel reminded him that nothing was to be added, or subtracted, or explained away.

Then a man named Hale rose, and asked if it were right for women to teach in sabbath schools. "Certainly it is!" answered Mr. Zenas Melendy, "very right and very proper." — "And if," continued Mr. Hale, "inquirers anxious for the welfare of their souls should come to your wife, seeking light on religious subjects, it would be right for her to give them information?" — "Certainly!" answered Mr. Zenas. "She would be very blame-worthy in not doing it." — "On the contrary," replied Mr. Hale, opening his Testament, "she is strictly forbidden to do it. Here Paul says, '*I suffer not a woman to teach.*' This excludes women from teaching the truths of the gospel, from teaching in the sabbath school, in high schools, normal schools, any schools."

"But Paul didn't mean," began Mr. Zenas — "Excuse me," interrupted Mr. Hale. "The conditions are, not to add, nor subtract, nor explain away. And here in Ephesians is another text."

Mr. Hale then read, “*Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands in every thing,*” and asked if that command were to be obeyed without adding, subtracting, or explaining away.

“Why, yes,” answered Mr. Zenas, with a hesitancy which caused a general smile; it being pretty well understood in Tweenit that Mrs. Zenas does not fulfil that command to the very letter.

“This injunction, then,” remarked Mr. Hale, “takes from wives all personal responsibility. Submit yourselves to your husbands in *every thing*. If a husband wishes his wife to do a wrong act, it is her duty to obey him.”

Mr. David said, that, of course, a woman should not do any thing against her own conscience. Mr. Hale replied, that the text left her no right of private judgment, inasmuch as Paul declared over and over again in his epistles, that the wife must submit to the husband, and that “*the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church.*” “And here,” Mr. Hale continued, “is a passage which commands us to ‘*Owe no man any thing.*’ Those who cannot worship in a building in which women speak cannot worship with any person who is in debt. And here again” (turning the leaves) “are other texts: ‘*Let no man seek his own, but every*

*man another's wealth.' 'Bear ye one another's burdens.'* These are equally emphatic: if one binds, all bind."

It was at this point that Cyrus Fennel (brother of Martha) made a hit at Mr. David. He arose, and, looking toward the old man, said he should like to inquire whether Christ's commands were as binding as those of Paul? Mr. David said that certainly they were, and more so. Cyrus then read these words of Christ: "*Give to every man that asketh of thee.*" This brought to every face an amused, half-pleased expression; Mr. David's stinginess being almost a by-word here. He replied, that every man has a duty to his family. Fennel Payne reminded him again that nothing was to be explained away, and then read other commands of Christ, each of a similar import to the one mentioned by Cyrus. He then repeated all the different texts which had been brought forward, beginning with that against women speaking in the church. "And now I want to ask," he continued, "why the first of these injunctions should be taken literally, and the others not?"

As Fennel Payne sat down, a tall, gray-haired man arose,—the same who came through the place, not long ago, selling "*Bitters*" of his own making

He is a pleasant-faced, good-humored man, and travels, with his jugs, in an antique carryall, on the outside of which is written with chalk, “ Archangel Bitters.” His name is Hensiford. This man arose, and, after asking permission to speak, said in a bland, mild tone, speaking slowly, “ My friends, it comes to my mind to ask a question, which is this : Why are men met together to decide this matter? My friends, if the Almighty Creator meant that woman should be judged by the law, he gave to her an understanding mind to understand the law : otherwise, God is unjust. And, my friends, if women are to be saved, or lost, according to the deeds done in the body, it must be that they have consciences whereby they may tell right from wrong : otherwise, God is unjust. My friends, woman either is a responsible being, or she is not a responsible being : she can’t be sometimes one, and sometimes the other. It does not appear to me, my friends, that we are called upon to decide this matter. The brother on my right hand allowed, just now, that woman should be guided by her conscience. Paul asks, ‘ Why is my liberty judged of another man’s conscience?’ Women might ask the same question by putting in the word ‘ any’ in place of ‘ another.’ And now, my friends,” continued

the old man, looking round with a persuasive smile, “what a plain and simple way it would be to let women understand *Scripter* with their own understandings, and regulate their behavior by the voice of their own consciences !”

## XIV.

## AN ENTERTAINING MEETING.

THE great chapel question has been decided at last by a *coup d'état*. Cyrus Fennel had promised to give a lot of land; and the deed was made out some time ago, but not signed. At last, growing impatient with what he called the narrowness of Mr. David and a few others, Cyrus declared that he never would sign the deed, unless it was agreed that any person and every person who might feel moved to speak in their meetings should have liberty to do so. Some one suggested to Mr. David that he come up with Cyrus by giving a lot of land himself. This thunder-clap of a suggestion cleared Mr. David's mental vision sufficiently to enable him to perceive that the minority should not stand out longer against the majority, and that possibly, by entering their protest, they had done all that was required of them.

Previous to this, however, a plan was proposed,

which elicited a curious little bit of information in regard to the law. The plan was, that the sewing-circle should build and own the chapel. Some one queried whether or not this could be done legally ; and, to make sure, Mrs. Hale and Adeline Payne went to Elmbridge one day, and consulted a lawyer.

The sewing-circle met here that afternoon ; and, on returning from Elmbridge, the two delegates hastened over to announce the result of their mission. The lawyer had assured them, they said, that no company of married women could own a building, or any other property. "Not even a hen-house," said Adeline. "The lawyer told us, that, if we two should want to set up storekeeping together, we couldn't own our stock of goods."

This announcement was followed by a dead calm, and the dead calm by a hurricane of exclamations : "Well, I declare!" "Now, if that isn't a good one!" "What, not when we earned the money to build it?" "Pretty state of things!" "I don't see why not!" "The ones that made that law better make it over! "\*

There was an old lady present,— a frequent visitor in Tweenit,— one Mrs. Heath, commonly called

\* Recent legislative proceedings show that some law-makers are of the same opinion.

"Aunt Mary," a white-haired, sallow-faced, but, on the whole, a pleasant-looking old lady. When the storm had subsided, Aunt Mary remarked in her quiet way, that she could tell them a fact or two about law. Her fact or two was as follows. She married, at the age of twenty-six, a seafaring man five years older than herself. Her husband made only one voyage after they were married. He owned a house and a small piece of ground: another piece was bought, partly with her money, both together making quite a snug little farm. She kept boarders some of the time, and made a practice of taking in work (tailoring had been her trade) in order to help along, so that what money was raised from the place might be spent on the place. They had no children. After twenty-eight years of married life she became a widow. The law gave her one-half the personal property, and the improvement of one-third of the real estate: the rest went to her husband's brother. "A share of the place was set off to me," said Aunt Mary, "and rights of way 'allowed me' across my own premises. I had some privileges in the house too, besides the rooms that were set off to me; the privilege, for instance, of going through my own front entry, and into my own sinkroom. Every thing in the house was

appraised. Samuel took half of the furniture, dishes, beds, and bedding ; took some things made of inlaid work and of shell-work,—things I set a good deal o' store by, because my husband brought them home to me before we were married. Li-zy kind o' hated to take 'em ; but she said, says she, ‘ You know everybody likes to have what's their own.’ ”

“ Couldn't he have made a will ? ” asked some one.

“ Oh, yes ! he could, and he did mean to make one. I was only speaking of the law. He meant to give it all to me.”

While Aunt Mary was telling her story, old Mr. Hale came in, father to the Mr. Hale who spoke in the meeting. The old man said he couldn't help feeling an interest to know how the lawyers laid down the law.

After hearing the decision, and hearing Aunt Mary's story, he said, “ Wal, ladies, you woman-kind must make up your minds to let patience have her parfect work. The laws favor ye more than they did. Women have come up considerable since Paul's day. I don't believe there's a minister in the land would stand up and preach a discourse in favor of that text, ‘ Women, submit yourselves unto your hus-

bands in every thing.' He'd be laughed down. And suppose a writer should write an es-say to prove that wives ought to keep that command, and send it to that biggest New-York double newspaper. What would the editor do with that es-say? Put it into his head column?

" You jest wait. There's a great to-do now about a woman's gittin' up to speak in a revival-meetin'. Wal, in my father's day, there was a great to-do about their not wearin' their veils into the meetin'-house. Ministers took sides, and arter a while it got into the Boston newspapers. The greatest ministers in the State preached for and agin it. There was a famous minister came to our town. I've heard my father tell the story many a time. Father said he was among the last of his teens then, and said he used to sit in a square pew in the gallery, back to the pulpit ; and the girl he wanted to go with sat down below, jest far enough off, and not too near, for him to keep lookin' at her, and she at him, now and then ; and that kind o' took up his mind in sermon-time. He had never durst to try to be her beau in earnest. He'd walked alongside once or twice, but never'd had the face to offer his arm ; and he'd made dependence on his Sundays, and been steady to meetin' for reasons aforesaid. Wal, when the veil

question begun to make a stir, all the girls, and she among 'em, became persuaded in their minds they ought to wear their veils into the meetin'-house, and keep 'em down ; and this caused a dreadful deprivation to him, and to others likewise.

" And, arter things had gone on so a spell, there came a famous preacher to town, one of the uncommon rare ones ; and he preached a sermon with thirteen heads, all goin' to show that women could keep their veils down, or not keep 'em down, jest as they pleased. That was in the forenoon. Father said, that, in the arternoon, every single girl in that meetin'-house sat all meetin'-time with her veil up He said 'twas jest like light breakin' in arter a cloudy shadow."

" And what about the girl ? " asked Martha Fennel. " Did he have the girl ? "

" No. The girl had a young man that she didn't look at, that sat over across in the other gallery."

" But it can't be true," remarked Adeline Payne, " that ministers really did pretend to dictate whether women should wear veils, or not ? "

" Jest what Mr. Picket's wife said, over at Elm Bridge, when I told them this same story. I said 'twas actooally true. And Mr. Picket, said he, ' I tell you how we'll prove it. You said 'twa : in

the old Boston newspapers. My cousin goes representative to General Court. They keep files of the old Boston papers in the Boston Library,' says he ; ' and I'll write my cousin word to look 'em over. We reckoned back, and found father must have been among the last of his teens about the year 1800 So Mr. Picket wrote word to his cousin ; and his cousin looked the files over, and found a paper that had a piece in it on this very subject ; and the name of the paper, if I don't mistake my memory was 'The Columbia Sentinel.' "

I was quite interested in this little story of Mr Hale's. Indeed, since my attention has been called to domestic science, I have felt a steadily-increasing interest in whatever relates to the condition of women, past, present, and future. Previous to that, I used to think, or rather took it for granted in an indifferent way without thinking, that, in matters of religion, women were on an equality with men. I had the impression that this equality was claimed for one of the results of Christianity as being enjoined by the text, ending, "Neither male nor female, but all one in Christ Jesus." A few sarcastic remarks of Nanny Joe (which remarks I had in mind while writing one of the early numbers of these papers), together with some of my own observations, have

caused me to read with close attention the discussions which are so continually going on in the papers in regard to what woman should or should not be allowed to do. And, with all my reading and all my thinking, I can arrive at no other conclusion than that of my friend who sells "Archangel Bitters;" namely, that woman, having been endowed by her Creator with mind and with conscience, should be left to understand Scripture with her own understanding, and to judge for herself what is right, and what is wrong, man not being accountable therefor.

## XV.

## THE WRITER FACES HIS OWN MUSIC.

A LADY-FRIEND, after looking over my papers, asked why I harped so much on the rather low and trivial subject of eating. "Because," said I, "daily observation has driven me to it." And this is just the truth. I see that everybody takes it for granted they must have good living, "whatever," to use Mrs. Melenyd's word, rather than pleasures of a higher grade, even the pleasure of helping the needy.

Take a close-fisted man like Mr. David, who, though well enough off, practises the strictest stinginess. With him the spending of each dime is carefully considered. A half-dollar given away is, as one may say, hung up in his memory, set in a frame, for handy reference. When such a man affords his family cakes, pies, preserves, and the like, for their daily food, we may consider such things to be firmly established as "must haves."

Indeed, all classes, poor as well as rich, seem to agree that the earning and compounding of these and similar articles rank among the chief objects of life. The very phrase “good living” shows this, since it implies that to live well is to eat well. A man said to me the other day, “When I can’t eat and drink what I want to, then I want to die.”

Now, if we were created only a *little* lower than the angels, there certainly should be a wider space between us and the inferior animals than such a state of gormandism denotes. Not that the pleasures of eating are to be wholly despised. There is, after all, a relationship between us and the brutes; and we need not be ashamed to own our kindred, or to share in their enjoyments. Besides, these grains, fruits, vegetables, &c., which we are called to meet three times a day, are all our relations, on the mother’s side (Mother Nature’s), and should by no means be regarded with contempt, especially as it is their destiny to be worked up into human beings, actually made bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh.

I believe in festival days with all my heart, which is the very best way of believing. I think we should sometimes call our friends together, and gratify the whole of them (not meaning all of

them, but the whole nature of each one),—give them bright thoughts for the intellect, friendliness for the heart, and good things for the palate, keeping, as regards the last, within the bounds of common-sense and healthfulness.

The palate craves enjoyment; and that craving, being a natural one, must be recognized as such. But what I insist upon is this; namely, that gratifying the palate shall not rank among the chief occupations or the chief enjoyments of life, for it has usurped those positions long enough.

And not only is it an usurper, crowding out better and more ennobling aims, but it makes slaves of women, and seriously affects their peace of mind. I have a bright-eyed young cousin, whose one idea, during the first half of the day at least, is to prepare a dinner which shall please the fastidious taste of her husband. For this end she works, plans, ponders, experiments, contrives, invents, and consults cook-books and cooks; and, this end attained, she is happy. But I have seen her at mealtime, when he has criticised unfavorably a dish on which she had spent much labor and more anxiety,—have seen her flush up, leave the table on some pretended errand, and (this is actual truth) brush tears from those bright eyes of hers. Another case. An elderly woman of

this village died recently, the chief end and aim of whose whole married life had been, so people say who know, to cook in such a manner as exactly to please her husband. She succeeded. That husband made the remark, in this very house, and within this very week, that he hadn't tasted a decent piece of custard-pie since his wife died. Among the wealthier classes it is just the same. I believe that Mrs. Manchester goes to her dinner-table every day with fear and trembling. Perhaps her case is worse than that of my cousin, as, with Mrs. Manchester, success or failure depends on the uncertain capabilities of Irish help. The blame, however, if blame there be, rests on Mrs. Manchester ; and I have seen that the sarcastic manner in which Mr. Manchester blames, sometimes cuts into the quick. These may be exceptional cases : I trust they are. But that this state of things does prevail more or less generally, cannot be denied. If, then, the low and trivial matter of eating be sufficiently high and important to take so very prominent a position among our enjoyments, and to seriously affect the peace and happiness of woman's life, why not harp on it?

It should be harped on, likewise, because it affects the condition of almost everybody. Simplify cookery, thus reducing the cost of living, and how many long-

ing individuals, now forbidden, would thereby be enabled to afford themselves the pleasures of culture, of travel, of social intercourse, of tasteful dwellings ! And it might be added, at the risk of raising a smile, how many pairs of waiting lovers, now forbidden, would thereby be enabled to marry, and go to—paradise, which is to say housekeeping !

Social intercourse, in a special manner, would be affected by the change. People “can’t have company, ’tis such hard work!” And no wonder ! A young woman of this village set before her company, the other afternoon, three kinds of cake, two of pie, three of preserves, besides Washington-pie, cookies, and hot and cold bread. Every woman who sat at that tea-table, when her turn of inviting the company comes round, will feel obliged to make a similar display. When this barbarous practice of stuffing one’s guests shall have been abolished, a social gathering will not necessarily imply hard labor and dyspepsia. Perhaps, when that time arrives, we shall be sufficiently civilized to demand pleasures of a higher sort. True, the entertainments will then, in one sense, be more costly, as culture is harder to come by than cake. The profusion of viands now heaped upon the table betrays poverty of the worst sort. Having nothing

better to offer, we offer victuals ; and this we do with something of that complacent, satisfied air with which some more northern tribes present their tidbits of whale and walrus.

When we have changed all this, it will then be given us to know the real pleasure of eating. At present our appetites are so vitiated by over-eating, that the keen edge of this pleasure is dulled. Whoever would enjoy it, sharpened at both edges, let him labor hard enough to feel actual hunger, and then take—why, take any simple thing, a baked potato, a slice of meat, a piece of bread. The dishes that make the work, and cost the money, are usually eaten after hunger is satisfied, and do harm, rather than good.

We often hear people remark, “Oh ! we don’t want to be thinking of what does harm, and what does good. The best way is to eat what’s on the table.” I know a mother who gives her only child, a little girl three years old, hot biscuits, mince-pie, rich cake, and the like, believing, she says, that “a child’s stomach should get used to every thing.” For her part, she believes in living the natural way, not in picking and choosing. Why not, on the same principle, let the child get used to all kinds of reading, and all kinds of companions ?

It is curious, the way people assume, that, because the present system of cooking and serving meals is customary, it is, therefore, natural ; as if the courses of a dinner, each with its central dish, and that with its revolving lesser dishes, were, equally with the solar system, an established order of nature. Meal-providers have sought out many inventions, and call these the “natural way.” They give us, at one sitting, fish, pork, flour, butter, salt, milk, eggs, raisins, spices, corn, potatoes, squash, coffee, sugar, saleratus, pickles, onions, lard, pepper, cooked fruits, tomatoes, essences, all variously combined; and say, “Here, eat, eat in the natural way.” Why natural? The men and women it helps to produce are, to some extent, its natural consequences ; but are they natural men and women? Hear them. “Oh, my head!” “Oh, my back!” “Oh, my side!” “Oh, my liver!” “Oh, my stomach!” “Oh, my nerves!” On every side resounds the mournful chorus. Seldom do we hear break in even one jubilant voice, chanting in response, “I am in perfect health. I feel no ache, no pain.” Is this, then, the natural way? But the system speaks for itself, or, rather, the innumerable host of invalids speak for it. So does the grand army of doctors. So do proprietors of patent medicines, rolling in wealth. Why, people take ill

health for granted. "No use telling your aches : everybody has 'em," is a remark often heard.

Occasionally an individual rebels, and insists on eating really simple and natural food. Such individual is straightway called odd. He is jeered at, ridiculed, accused of thinking about his stomach, and about what merely goes to sustain the body, as if such thinking were not worth while.

Now, these bodies are nearer and dearer to us than any other earthly possession. And, what is more, they will cling to us. We are joined to them for better or worse ; and from this union there is no divorce, till death do us part. Why, then, scoff at them? Why not, on the contrary, seriously consider how we may build them up as pure, as strong, and as perfect as may be? Not worth while to think about one's stomach? Why? The stomach is not an obscure party, doing business in a small way, and on its own account. It is leading partner in an important and influential firm, — "Stomach, Brains, & Co." There is nothing vulgar about brains ; oh, no ! They have always been respectable. Well, in this great firm, each member is liable for all, and all for each. If one runs in debt, the others have to pay. It is well known that the condition of the brain and other organs is affected by the quality of

the blood, and the quality of the blood, by the quality of the food. The change of food into blood is a chemical process ; and why is not human chemistry as well worth studying as any other kind? for instance, that by which the manufacturer selects the best chemicals for his various dyestuffs, and the gardener those best adapted to his various soils. The time may come when this chemistry of eating shall rank with other scientific studies. People shall then be allowed to “pick and choose” the diet best calculated to make healthy nerves, blood, bones, &c. ; and they shall not suffer ridicule for so doing.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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**YENSIE WALTON'S WOMANHOOD.** By Mrs. S. R. Graham Clark. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. Nine out of ten Sunday-school scholars have read *Yensie Walton*, one of the best and most interesting books that ever went into a Sunday-school library. The present volume introduces Yensie in a new home and under new conditions. She enters the family of a friend as an instructor of the younger members, and the narrative of her experiences will especially interest those who have to do with the moral and mental training of children. The author shows that all children are not made after the same pattern, and that one line of treatment is not of universal application. In one of her pupils, a boy of brilliant mental endowments, whose mind has become embittered because of a physical deformity, Yensie finds much to interest as well as to discourage her. She perseveres, however, and by studying his character carefully and working upon him from the right side, she gradually works a change in his disposition and brings his better qualities into active exercise. This is scarcely accomplished when a call from Valley Farm reaches her. Ever prompt to do duty's bidding, Yensie quits this happy home for the sterner requirements of her uncle's family, where she labored with unflagging interest and determination until that much-loved relative says his last good-by. It is then that the hitherto silenced woer refusess to be longer quiet, and our heroine goes out from the old red farm-house to her wedded home, where as a wife and mother she makes duty paramount to pleasure, and every circumstance of life is met with that same fortitude characteristic of the Yensie Walton you so much admire. Besides the characters with which the reader is already familiar through the former work, others are introduced which are equally well drawn, and which serve to round out the story to completeness.

**THE MOTHER'S RECORD OF THE MENTAL, MORAL AND PHYSICAL LIFE OF HER CHILD.** Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Quarto. \$1.00. This work is valuable as it is unique. It is prepared by a Massachusetts woman, and though originally intended for her own benefit, has been published for the help of mothers everywhere. It is intended for a yearly chronicle of the child's growth and development, mental and physical, and will be an important aid to mothers who devote themselves to conscientious training of their little ones.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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NEXT THINGS. By Pansy. A Story for Little Folks. Fully illustrated. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. This is a bright little story with two heroes, and the lesson it tries to teach young readers is to do the work that lies nearest to them first; in other words, "What to do next. No one can do the second thing; he can do the first." Bound up in the same cover is a capital story called "Dorrie's Day," in which are related the adventures of a little girl who went to sleep in the cars and got carried out of her way. The history of what she did, and how she got home, will interest the children.

MRS. HARRY HARPER'S AWAKENING. A Missionary story by Pansy. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. This is one of Pansy's "lesson books," in which, under the guise of a story, she drives home a truth so thoroughly that the dullest and most unimpressible reader cannot help seeing and feeling it. Mrs. Harry Harper was a young wife in a strange city, without acquaintances, and with nothing to do during the long hours of the day while her husband was absent at his business. One day in walking aimlessly along the street she follows a crowd of ladies into what she supposes is a bazar, but what she soon discovers to be a missionary meeting. Her attention is excited by what she sees and hears; her sympathies and religious feelings are awakened, and she enters into practical Christian work with all her heart and soul. The book is one of serious purpose and falling into the hands of people like Mrs. Harper will be a means of undoubted good.

PIZARRO; or, The Discovery and Conquest of Peru. Illustrated. Edited by Fred H. Allen. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.00. This is the third volume in Mr. Allen's valuable little series, and is a concise and interesting history of a country which at this very moment is undergoing a conquest as bloody and exhaustive as that which occurred 350 years ago, when the Spanish ancestors of the present race of Peruvians carried fire and slaughter into the homes of the native inhabitants. The story is told with spirit, and with enough detail to enable the reader to get a clear and connected idea of the different campaigns of Pizarro in South America from the time of his landing on its shores in 1509 until his assassination by his own countrymen in his house in Lima in 1541.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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DOCTOR DICK: A sequel to "*Six Little Rebels*. By Kate Tannatt Woods. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co. Price, \$1.50. Ever since the publication of that charming story, *Six Little Rebels*, there has been a constant demand from all quarters for a continuation of the adventures of the bright young Southerners and their Northern friends. The handsome, well-illustrated volume before us is the result. The story begins with Dick and Reginald at Harvard, with Miss Lucinda as their housekeeper, and a number of old friends as fellow-boarders. Dolly and Cora are not forgotten, and hold conspicuous places in the narrative, which is enlivened by bright dialogue and genuine fun. What they all do in their respective places—the boys at college, Cora at Vassar, Dolly with her father, Mrs. Miller at Washington, and the others at their posts of duty or necessity, is entertainingly described. The story of the fall of Richmond and the assassination of Lincoln are vividly told. One of the most interesting chapters of the book is that which describes the visit, after the fall of the Confederacy, of Reginald's father, General Gresham, to Cambridge, and the rejoicings which followed. The whole book is full of life and incident, and will be thoroughly enjoyed by young readers.

YOUNG FOLKS' HISTORY OF RUSSIA. By Nathan Haskell Dole, editor and translator of "Rambaud's Popular History of Russia." Fully illustrated. 12mo, cloth, \$1.50; half Russia, \$2.00. Mr. Dole has for several years made a careful and special study of Russian history, and the volume before us bears testimony to the critical thoroughness of the knowledge thus gained. Russia has no certain history before the ninth century, although there is no lack of legend and tradition. Some attention is given to these, but the real record of events begins just after the time Vladimir became Prince of Kief, about the beginning of the tenth century. The contents are divided into two books, the first being sub-divided into "Heroic Russia," "Russia of the Princes," "The Enslavement of Russia," and "The Russia of Moscow." The second book deals with Russia after its establishment as an empire, and its sub-divisions have for their special subjects, "Ivan the Tyrant," "The Time of the Troubles," "The House of the Romanoffs," and "Modern Russia." It would have been in place had Mr. Dole given the reader a chapter on modern Russian politics, a thing which could easily have been done, and which is absolutely necessary to enable the reader to understand current events and prospective movements in the empire. The volume is profusely illustrated, and contains two double-page colored maps.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

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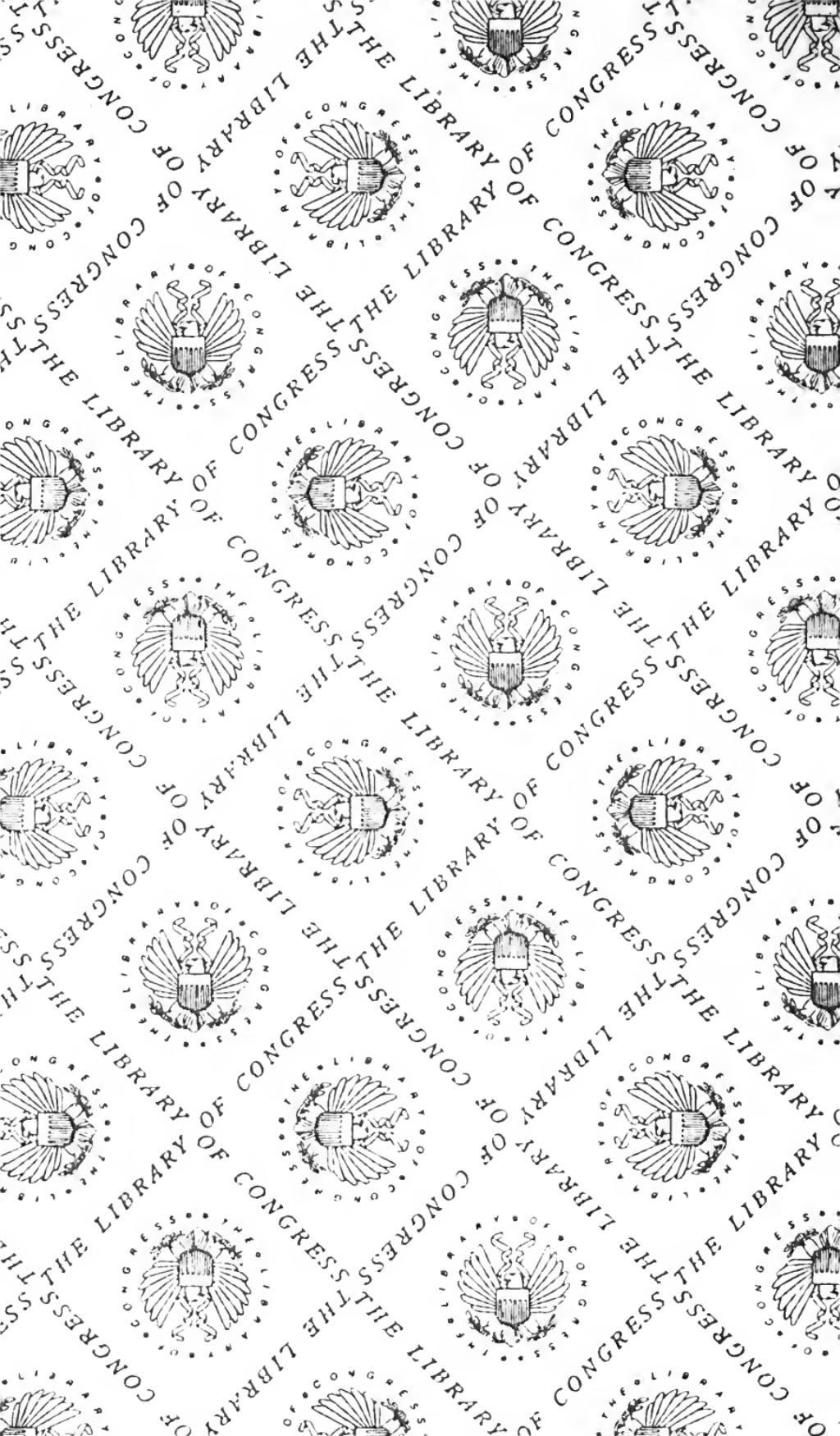
**OUT AND ABOUT.** By Kate Tannatt Woods. Illustrated. Boston : D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.50. Every boy and girl in the country used to delight in the Bodley books, and here is a volume which is in all respects their worthy successor. It is based upon something like the same plan, in that it takes a whole family, instead of a single member of it, about the country sight-seeing. We might rather say two whole families, for that is just what the author does. The Hudsons and the Marstons are neighbors in the vicinity of Boston, and the children are great friends. They all go to Cape Cod and Nantucket to spend the summer, and from there the Hudsons are called away to San Francisco by Col. Hudson, who is an army officer, and is stationed there. The book describes their stay on the Cape, and their long overland journey to the Pacific coast. Its interest is not wholly confined to the members of the party, for the author takes special pains to give correct and vivid pictures of the various places visited. The illustrations are some of the best ever put into a children's book, and are many from drawings and photographs made on the spot.

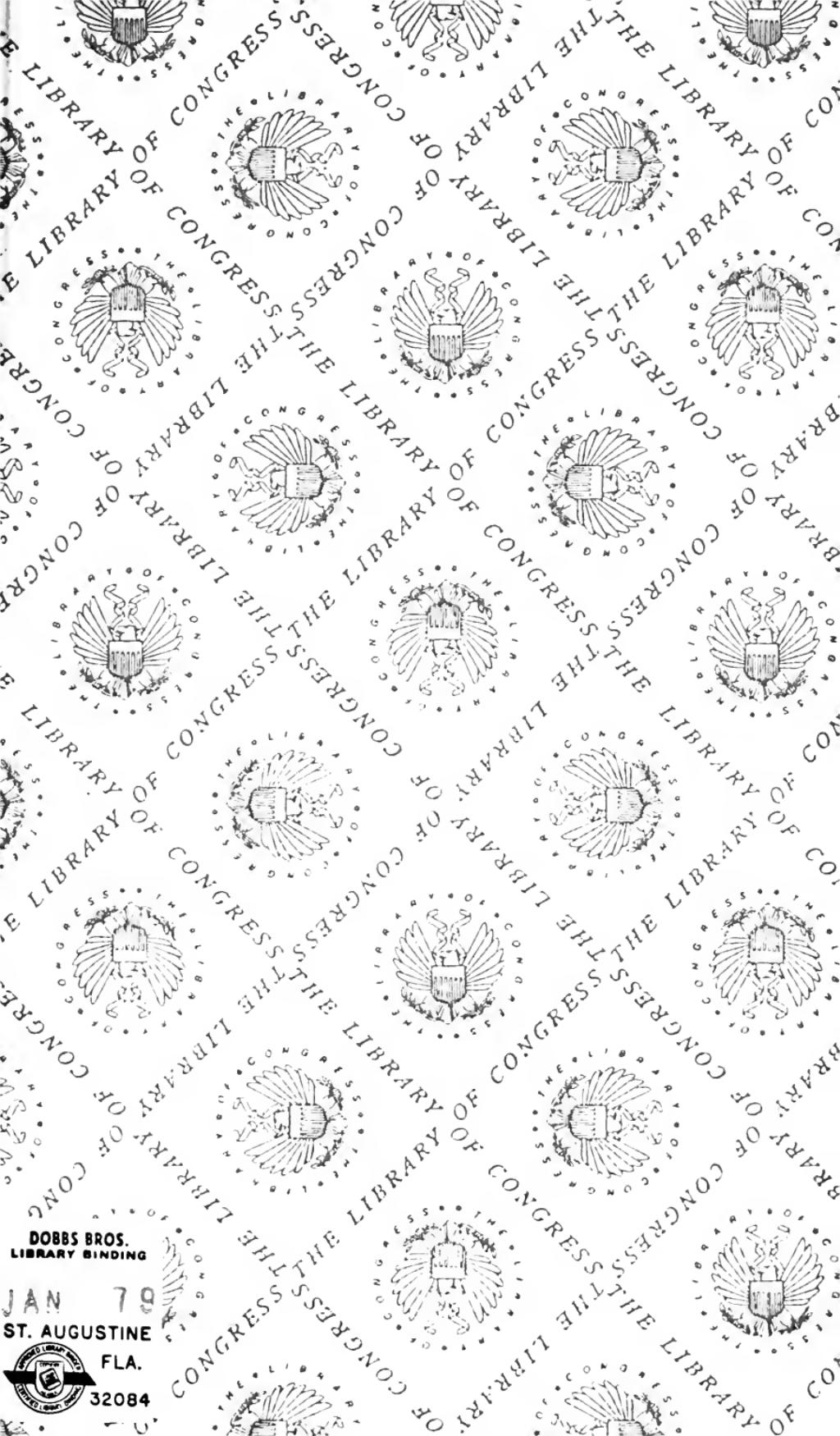
**CHRONICLES OF THE STIMPETT FAMILY.** By Abby Morton Diaz. Boston : D. Lothrop & Co. Price \$1.25. Some one once said, "Give a Frenchman an onion and a beef-bone, and he will make a dozen different kinds of delicious soup." Give Mrs. Diaz two or three simple incidents, and she will manufacture half a dozen stories so sprightly and jolly, and so full of every day human nature withal, that to the young they are a source of perennial delight, while the old people can get as much enjoyment out of them as from a volume of Scott or Dickens. This new book, which has never seen the light in any newspaper or magazine, will be ready in ample time for the holidays, and the father who wants to make his little ones perfectly happy at that time will take good care to secure a copy. The Stimpetts have a "Family Story Teller," and the wonderful, queer, strange and funny stories which this individual has treasured up in his memory, and retails to the children on various occasions, will be laughed over, and talked over, and thought over, until the author is ready with another volume.











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